

Sketch

Drinking deep of Tory doctrine



Simon Hoggart

THE permanent campaign of modern British politics, as a policy, every speech and every statement has to have its rebuttal from the other side. Labour has a new computer system entirely devoted to rebutting the Conservatives. Older members merely believed in head-butting them.

Yesterday the Conservatives sent up their own rebuttal to the TUC Congress in Blackpool. He was David Willetts, the Paymaster General, and he set up shop in a corner of Yates wine lodge orders from Central Offices were to sit in Yates and buy the hacks champagne, he told us.

Model which, as models go, has had slightly less success at economic forecasting than Kate Moss.

In the conference yesterday we had a nostalgic frisson when Arthur Scargill staged an angry walkout. Sadly for him this occurred when the lights were down, during a film presentation about a TUC anti-racism rock concert in London called Respect.

"Respect" featured various musicians you may have heard of, but Arthur Scargill probably hasn't. ("Weave on the decks, harmonised with melancholy synth chords and propelled by bell-like bass lines", according to the official Congress programme, referring to LTJ Burken, not Mr Scargill.)

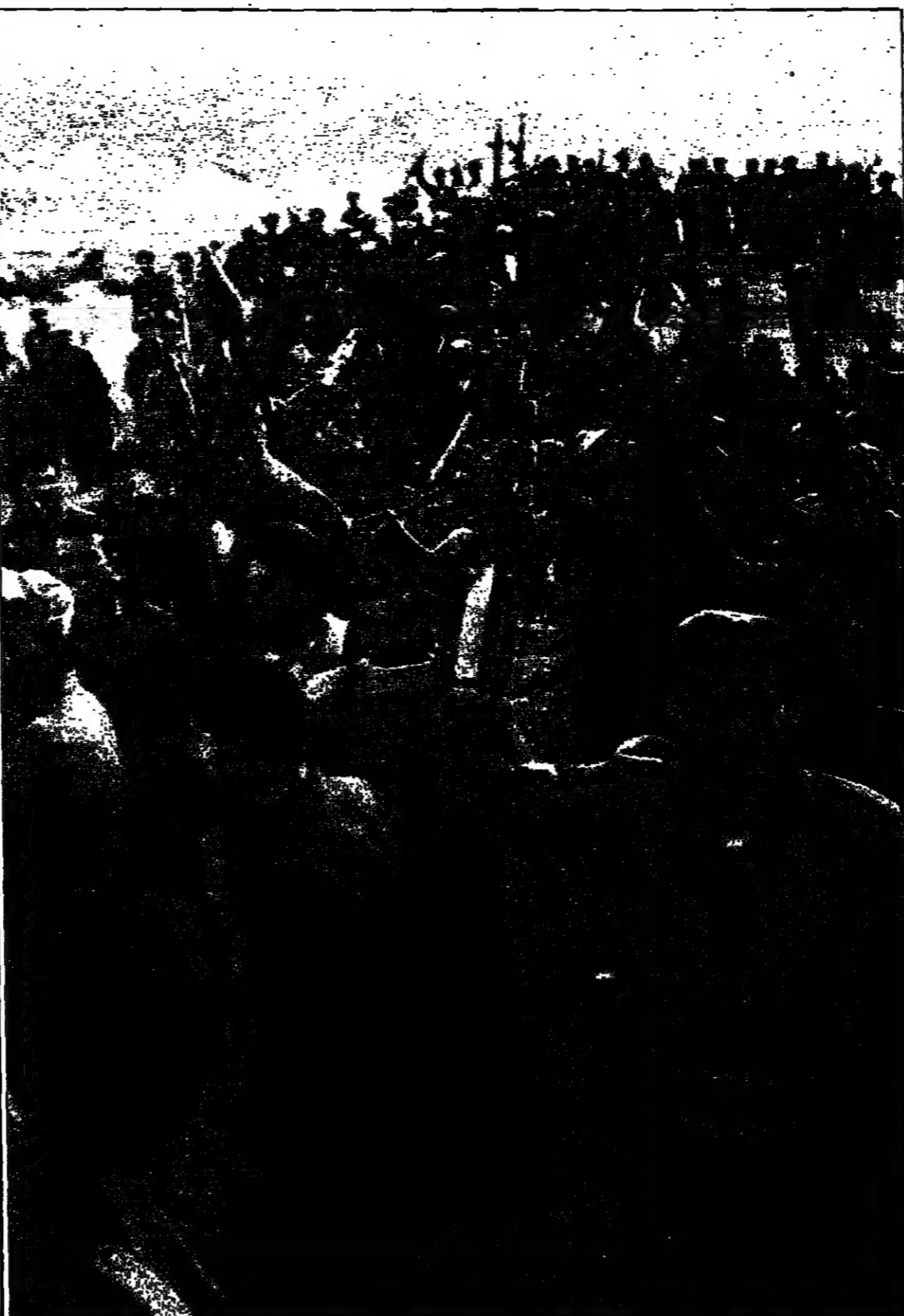
The NUM president and his delegation (two people) walked on the stage as if they were referring to the music as "wicked, boss", a phrase which 20 years ago had a quite different meaning here.

Mr Scargill returned in time to make a heated speech on the minimum wage. He was greeted by a sound unfamiliar to him lately — loud and prolonged applause.

But everything has changed so much. In spite of their position in yesterday's debate these delegates are well turned out professionals in suits. To an increasing extent, union membership is a middle-class luxury, like the office car.

Alongside Mr Scargill's few members and Rodney Bickerstaffe's hospital workers are the civil servants, bank clerks, actors, consultants, scientists and professional footballers. Meanwhile, in the private sector, the poor are demoralised, returned to the lumpen proletariat from which their great-grandparents emerged.

There's even a classic sextet playing in the intervals, under the title Music For Congress, which most of us thought meant Ravel's Bolero.



Fighters from the Iraqi-backed Kurdistan Democratic Party celebrate their recent victory near Sulaimaniya, northern Iraq

Ministers to agree cut in BSE cull

Rebecca Smithers and Stephen Bates

MINISTERS are likely to agree controversial plans today to cut the accelerated slaughter of some 120,000 cattle in the wake of the BSE crisis, to be formally submitted to European ministers on Monday.

Government sources admitted last night it was "highly improbable" that the plans — drawn up to take account of new scientific evidence showing that "mad cow disease" will die out naturally in five years — would be rejected at the Cabinet meeting today.

The development means a victory for Tory Eurosceptics and MPs with farming interests who had threatened to oppose the legislative order authorising the cull through the Commons. But the proposal jeopardises any chance of an end to the British beef ban in the short to medium term.

Yesterday John Major confirmed the Government was reviewing the scheme — planned in addition to a separate cull of up to one million cattle more than 30 months old — but stressed the final decision would be taken "in consultation" with the European Union. There have been suggestions that the Government could cut the cull by as much as a third.

The first step of the consultation with the EU began yesterday, after the Government's decision to reconsider its pledge to Brussels over the cull was explained in detail to EU senior veterinary officers by Keith Meldrum, the Government's chief vet.

But earlier, the Commission warned the Government against going back on the deal reached by EU leaders in Florence in June.

Officials and diplomats in Brussels yesterday were suggesting that the Downing Street announcement meant Britain had effectively given up trying to persuade other member states to agree to an early lifting of the beef ban.

In Brussels it has long been believed there was no chance of any lifting of the beef ban this year, with some arguing it is unlikely to be lifted before BSE is eradicated in Britain.

There is little sympathy for the Government and, with European beef farmers also suffering from the collapse of consumer demand, no political will to accept an apparent reduction in the measures taken to eradicate the disease. Other member states were still saying yesterday that an increase in the number of cattle killed might be needed.

The proposals by the Agriculture Minister, Douglas Hogg, will be discussed by the Cabinet today, along with the latest scientific evidence. He will also brief the Cabinet BSE crisis committee, and will relay the decision to EU agriculture ministers on Monday.

It looks likely that ministers will back either a suspension of the cull for a number of years, or a cutting back of the numbers involved.

"Nobody should expect snap decisions but it is right to examine and make sure the policy is correct in the light of new information," Mr Major said.

Mr Meldrum said last night: "An argument can be deployed that there is no reason to carry through a selective cull because we would not speed the demise of the epidemic. We have said whatever we do should be based on science. We have two new reports and both must be taken into consideration."

As well as the evidence about the gradual "extinction" of BSE, he was referring to revelations by UK scientists last month that BSE can be transmitted from cows to their calves.

Eurosceptic MP Bill Cash said: "It is essential that ministers review the position, and furthermore that we take a realistic view about the line the EU is going to take. It is important that we continue to protect British farmers who are being very badly treated by the rest of the European Union."

Review

Still moralising after 400 years

Lyn Gardner

Damon and Pythias The Globe

RICHARD EDWARDS was master of the 18th century children's acting company, the Boys of the Chapel Royal, which frequently performed at the court of Elizabeth I. He was also a playwright whose verse was much given to "sipping friends' 'doleful dumps" and "weeping in woe".

His contemporary, the poet Barnaby Rudge, described him "greater than Terence and Plautus". Others have been less kind. Shakespeare, who as a Stratford schoolboy almost certainly studied Damon and Pythias with its moral message about faithful friendship, gazed the Edwards style in A Midsummer Night's Dream. However, it didn't stop Shakespeare using Damon and Pythias as a source for his own first play, Two Gentlemen of Verona.

In the circumstances, you might think that a drama that is thought to have been unperformed for more than 400 years would have very little to recommend it. But at the Globe last night, in a one-off performance as the first of the theatre's efforts to stage rarely played Elizabethan and Jacobean plays, Damon and Pythias was shown to be bursting with life.

Rosalind King, who called this rowdy version from the over-punctuated 1971 edition, and director Gaynor McFarlane have unearthed a tragedy-comedy that is a very acceptable rough diamond.

The plot is simple. Damon and Pythias, two devoted Greek friends, arrive in Syracuse at the court of the tyrant King Dionysius. The knavish courtier Carisophus makes false accusations against Damon, who is arrested and sentenced to death. Damon begs to be allowed one last visit to Greece, to which Dionysius agrees only because Pythias begs to stand as hostage for his friend. If Damon does not return by the agreed hour, Pythias must die in his place. McFarlane's master stroke is to play the piece in 20th century garb, which gives the audience a simple stereotype to latch on to — Damon and Pythias as a couple of killed Scots on a sightseeing tour; the cowardly Jack and Will are a couple of blustering Teddy Boys; the arresting officer a Keystone Cop and Dionysius a stinky dissembler in a red smoking jacket.

The climax is handled brilliantly, from the crooning angels who appear in the gallery as Pythias's death draws nearer, to the farcical arguments between the two friends about which should die.

It proved a pleasantly surprising evening, which restored a dead work to the stage and which also provided a fantastic showcase for the considerable comic talents of its female cast, led by Maureen Beattie and Patricia Kerrigan as the devoted friends who have "two bodies but one heart". An audience of academics, critics, groundlings and a baby showed appreciation by hissing and cheering in all the right places.

This review appeared in later editions yesterday.

Heads seek full expulsion rights

John Carvel Education Editor

HEAD teachers yesterday demanded sweeping powers to expel troublesome pupils without interference from "emotional" school governors.

As the row continued over the fate of a 10-year-old accused of disrupting Manton junior school in Warwick, Nottinghamshire, they said heads should have complete authority to decide when a school can no longer be reasonably expected to cope with an unruly child.

"The pendulum has swung too far in the direction of individual parental and pupil rights," said David Hart, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers.

"It is time the interests of the law-abiding majority of parents, pupils and their teachers were given equal recognition."

The association called on Gillian Shephard, the Education and Employment Secretary, to remove parents' right to go to an appeals panel to challenge a pupil's exclusion if the school's head, governors and the local authority agreed that the child was unduly disruptive.

But neither the governors nor the local authority should be allowed to make a fresh judgment about the facts of the case, Mr Hart said. They should only check that the head teacher followed correct procedures.

Parents whose children had been excluded from two or more schools should no longer

have the right to insist they be admitted to another one. Although this could lead to a few children being banned from all local schools, it was essential the educational needs of the majority of children should have priority.

Mr Hart condemned the "indignous situation" at Manton school where the governors overruled the head's decision to expel 10-year-old Matthew Wilson and brought in a personal tutor, costing £14,000 a year. It was not surprising that the majority of teachers and parents opposed the move, since there would have to be cuts in books, equipment or even a normal teaching job to balance the budget.

The Department for Education and Employment said it would consider the association's proposals. Mrs Shephard is planning legislation to require appeals panels to consider the interests of all the children in a school when deciding on whether a troublesome child should be excluded.

The association called for a package of other disciplinary powers, including detention after school without parents' agreement. Head teachers should be allowed to insist that parents sign a home-school contract about children's behaviour as a condition of admission to the school.

Pressure was mounting on Mrs Shephard to intervene in the Nottinghamshire dispute. But despite a call from Joe Ashton, the local MP, to meet parents, staff and governors, she said the matter should be resolved by the local education authority.

Labour braced for battle over level of minimum wage

continued from page 1

Mr Blair has made it clear the minimum wage will be set at a level the country can afford. A Low Pay Commission — made up of employers, unions and academics — will be told not to recommend a figure which could be seen as damaging public finances or endangering jobs.

The Conservatives exploited Labour's embarrassment over the minimum wage vote. The Government believes the minimum wage, coupled with the strike curbs controversy and last week's fiasco over Scottish devolution, will eat away at the public's trust in Labour as the election approaches.

John Major said: "Yesterday we had an absolutely shambolic day, with Mr Blunkett and Mr Blair contradicting themselves and changing policy almost on the hour. Heaven knows what will happen over the next few weeks." Labour took some comfort

last night from the fact that the TUC conference voted to back a leadership-backed union calling for "more than 24", but leaving the precise figure flexible until after the election, alongside the demand for £4.26 in the first year of a Labour government. The TUC leadership says the former will take priority over the £4.26 position — moved by Mr Bickerstaffe and the miners' leader Arthur Scargill — because it is the official General Council line.

John Monks, TUC general secretary, said: "We are not trying to impose a figure on the Labour Party — we are getting our own position clear so that we can go forward." Ian McCartney, Labour's employment spokesman, said last night that the TUC leadership position was "very helpful". But it was also clear last night that £4.26 has been put firmly on the political agenda and is seen as the target by some unions.

France and Germany hatch secret deal to speed monetary union

continued from page 1

defence "identity" through a reformed and enlarged Nato — as long advocated by Britain. France and Germany also now accept that big decisions on foreign and security policy will not be taken by majority vote — as they originally suggested — and that the European Commission's role in these matters will remain limited.

Britain will accept that responsibility for formulating common EU foreign policies should pass to Brussels-based experts rather than diplomats in national capitals. Britain is also to abandon its opposition to the inclusion in the Maastricht treaty of a clear EU role in international peacekeeping and other security missions.

The German cabinet will finalise its new strategy for the Maastricht treaty review in Bonn on October 1 and French and German ministers will hammer out an agreed joint line for the IGC negotiations in Paris the

following day. Chancellor Helmut Kohl then plans to travel to Dublin for a meeting with the prime minister, John Bruton, who will chair the summit on October 5.

In the first of two EU summits this autumn, the Dublin meeting will focus on achieving agreement on foreign and security policy, a commitment to employment goals and an EU role in the fight against crime.

French pressure on the EU to settle for more modest changes to the Maastricht treaty has angered the Commission, the European Parliament and more insurrectionist EU countries — notably the Benelux states.

ANDIE MacDOWELL CUTS WAFF MODELS DOWN TO SIZE. Andie MacDowell talks exclusively to Radio Times about her modelling years. How it got her into Hollywood and nearly got her laughed out. And how models aren't what they used to be. RadioTimes IT'S NOT WHAT YOU EXPECT.

Dangers of country music

Tim Radford

US sociologists have discovered a link between the number of times country music is played on the radio and the suicide rate among urban white males in parts of America.

They reported that one US research team studied country music and found it to be — "a style which often dwells on several themes, such as heavy alcohol consumption, loss of a loved one" which are predictive of suicide.

Adrian North and David Hargreaves, of Leicester University, have been collecting evidence of the impact of music on everyday life. They reported that one US research team studied country music and found it to be — "a style which often dwells on several themes, such as heavy alcohol consumption, loss of a loved one" which are predictive of suicide.

Grounded: the co-pilot who discovered fear of flying — at 33,000 feet

Lawrence Donegan

THE roll-call of abject British failures, which stretches from Eddie the Eagle to the Sinclair CS, gained a new entry yesterday with the discovery of the airline co-pilot who was scared of heights.

The British-born first officer, who had been flying since 1989, caused an aircraft carrying 49 passengers from Britain to Italy to

divert after he told the pilot he was "frightened of the altitude".

Despite the efforts of other crew members to calm him, the co-pilot continued to "show symptoms of anxiety and stress" and the pilot was forced to land the aircraft at Lyon, according to an Air Accidents Investigation Branch report.

The incident happened as a Maersk Air flight from Birmingham to Milan was

passing over Moulins, France, at 33,000 feet in May.

The co-pilot's condition improved once the plane started its descent into Lyon and he was able to help the pilot with landing procedures, the report says.

He was immediately suspended from duty and subsequently failed the required medical tests. He has since left Maersk Air. A company spokeswoman

would say only that he was a married man in his 30s. He is thought to have joined the airline company, a British Airways franchise operator, after working as a commercial pilot for two other airlines since 1989.

"He had been with us for just under a year and there had been no problem before. I don't believe he is flying any more and I'm not sure what work he is now involved in," the spokeswoman said.

John, in Italy

Susannah Frankel on the battle lines being drawn up a few weeks before the start of the spring/summer collections Style or fashion? Top designers go to war

GIORGIO ARMANI



"Fashion is finished, specifically the fashion system in which style is dictated from above and the public swallows each season's diktat about this colour, that length, this mood and no other... Modern fashion is about freedom, democracy and individualism, and this is a development that I, for one, welcome."

Giorgio Armani



The Armani style: a minimalism which the Italian designer introduced to the world



VERSACE



"At the beginning of each season there are fashion designers who discover all of a sudden that fashion is dead, perhaps confusing overall appreciation with a personal problem. Armani is one of the big names for products made in Italy and he should support them as I and many others do."

Gianni Versace

ONLY weeks before the start of the spring/summer collections, a fashion war appears to be breaking out between Italy's two superstar designers Gianni Versace and Giorgio Armani. Earlier this week, an article in the *Corriere della Sera*, one of Italy's leading broadsheets, said Armani was "celebrating the death of fashion". "Fashion is finished," he told the paper and Versace, himself not averse to more than his fair share of publicity — particularly in the run-up to show time — wasted no time in responding. "At the beginning of each season there are fashion designers who discover all of a sudden that fashion is dead, perhaps confusing overall appreciation with a personal problem," he said. Of course, Armani and Versace, Italy's kings of minimalism and glamour respectively, are hardly strangers to this kind of feuding. In fact, if the Italian press is to be believed, they're at it constantly. Armani, in particular, repeat-

"Fashion is absolutely not dead, it just goes on and on and that's the best thing about it. The best thing about fashion is its ability to constantly reinvent itself."
Betty Jackson
"Fashion is definitely very much alive in London."
Ren Pearce, Pearce Fionda
"Fashion is not quite dead although mass manufac-

ture downgrades things. Neither Armani nor Versace are about fashion. They are about style, about mass manufacture and about hype. Fashion is a barometer of culture. If there is no fashion, there is no culture."
Vivienne Westwood
"Saying fashion is dead is a very fashionable thing to say."
Katharine Hamnett

man responsible for introducing this type of dressing to the world in the first place, seem sadly dated. Although he is still routinely described as one of the world's most important and influential fashion designers (he's certainly one of the richest), Armani, aged 62, finds himself in the unhappy position whereby his imitators (Calvin Klein and Jil Sander to name just two) have overtaken him. Still, Versace, aged 50, clearly feels he should keep his grievances to himself. "Armani is one of the big names for products made in Italy and he should support them as I and many others do," he said. For his part, Armani says he has been quoted out of context. "When I said 'fashion is finished' I meant specifically the fashion system in which style is dictated from above and the public swallows each season's diktat about this colour, that length, this mood and no other... Modern fashion is about freedom, democracy and individualism, and this is a development that I, for one, welcome."

edly expresses his disdain not only for Versace but also for other leading Italian houses, including Prada and Gucci, currently finding favour with the fashion cognoscenti. Soar grapes? Versace certainly seems to think so. And perhaps with good reason. It's no secret, after all, that where Armani used to be the designer favoured by the glitterati, today any Hollywood starlet or rock star worth his or her salt (from Liz Hurley and Lisa-Marie Presley to

Robbie Williams and Madonna who also starred in two of Versace's recent advertising campaigns) wears Versace instead. In terms of Hollywood, an arena of prime importance for any fashion designer, Armani is clearly fighting a losing battle. To underestimate his genius, however, would be a mistake. It is perhaps ironic that with fashion in general at its most effortlessly stylish, pared down and minimal, the designs of Giorgio Armani, without question the

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Unemployment to dip below 2m

Sarah Ryle
UNEMPLOYMENT is on course to dip below two million before the general election according to official estimates unveiled yesterday. Whitehall officials reported the number of jobless in August fell to 2,110,400 or 7.5 per cent, its lowest for more than five years — and well below the rate of 10.5 and 12.5 per cent respectively in Germany and France. The number of people claiming unemployment benefit is set to fall by 15,000 a

month, officials said. That could bring the Government's measure of unemployment to below two million in time for a spring general election. The average monthly fall over the last three months was 18,600, supporting the official trend estimate. Seasonally adjusted employment levels rose by 90,000 in the three months to June to 25,810,000. Labour compared the fall in official unemployment of 180,000 in the year to August with the 93,000 rise in the workforce over the same period, arguing that half of those leaving the claimant count had not found jobs.

The party's employment spokesman, Ian McCartney, said: "They are joining the forgotten flock, the 2.75 million economically inactive men excluded from the unemployment figures." Labour Force Survey figures, using an internationally agreed definition of joblessness, showed unemployment rose by 11,000 in the three months to May against a 46,000 fall in claimants, renewing speculation that the Government's figures mask the real state of the labour market. Fears that falling unemployment could trigger higher wages and threaten the Gov-

ernment's inflation target of 2.5 per cent were dampened down by data showing the underlying average wage growth in July was 3.75 per cent, leaving the rate unchanged for six months. Weakness in manufacturing and restraint in overall wage growth combined to support City analysts' predictions that the official headline inflation rate last month, published today, will fall to 2 per cent. This renewed speculation last night that the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, might be tempted to risk another economy-stimulating cut in interest rates.

Somehow this shabbily dressed gay buffoon with his falsetto giggle; this fidgeting, bumbling public speaker, described as "grotesque, impulsive, school-boyish, humorous and almost clownish" ran rings around the British government.
Peter Godwin on Cecil Rhodes

G2 cover story

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News in brief

Coe quits gun group over Dunblane slur

CONSERVATIVE MP Sebastian Coe yesterday resigned as president of the National Pistol Association in protest at the criticism of a bereaved Dunblane parent contained in the latest NPA newsletter...

Labour attacks HMSO sale

A NEW row over the "half price" sale of government assets broke out yesterday after it was revealed that Roger Freeman, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, is selling Parliament's printers to a private consortium of City financiers for £54 million...

Ivanhoe tops BBC schedule

A SWASHBUCKLING adaptation of Sir Walter Scott's Ivanhoe and a bodice-ripping version of Henry Fielding's 18th Century classic novel Tom Jones head the BBC's £184 million drama schedule for next year...

Scots 'face tidal wave risk'

SCOTLAND runs the risk of being swamped by a string of high-speed, 100-foot tidal waves, a scientist warned yesterday. In a weather forecast which will alarm coastal communities from Dunbar to Lerwick, David Smith, of Coventry University, says the country remains vulnerable to the same sort of aquatic calamity which drenched mesolithic Scots 8,000 years ago...

Correction

A REPORT in the Guardian yesterday on an inquiry into Grimsby hospital's obstetric and gynaecology services incorrectly stated that the review concluded that a child's death could be traced to an amniocentesis test. In fact the investigating team stated that the amniocentesis was unlikely to be the cause and an inquest jury in November 1996 returned a verdict that the child died from natural causes.

Prescott regales US with tales of Jaguars, Blair and 'bumpy rides'

YOU could tell it was a special occasion because Tina Brown was not in her usual booth. The New Yorker editor had swapped it for a less exclusive one nearer the bar to hear John Prescott pitch New Labour to Manhattan's media elite.

"My first impression was to say 'Hello Brain Drain,'" said Mr Prescott, referring to the battalion of ex-pat journalists who control a sizeable portion of New York's media and publishing business. On the face of it Mr Prescott's breakfast talk on What Tony Blair's England Might Be Like looked a distinctly New Labour affair...

Ian Katz reports from New York



Prescott and the apparently near-converted Tina Brown



secondly whether he had suffered any mental instability. To the first question he responded No and to the second: "Yes, I had an amniocentesis test when I was in New York but it was a waste of time because I was a Communist and I also evinced surprise

Labour planned to combat negative campaigning by the Tories, Mr Prescott said he thought Labour had over-reacted to the Conservative advert featuring Mr Blair with apparently devilish eyes, but otherwise steered clear of any possible controversy.

He envied the way Democratic Party leaders could criticise certain Clinton policies at their convention. "The press treat that as diversity in unity. If I was to breathe even at this dinner any suggestion of criticism it would be a major split between me and Tony Blair."

nest Bevin in the modern Labour movement". Both men shared roots in Pres-tatyn and came from humble "railway folk", he said. Later Mr Evans told the Guardian that he had recently joined Labour. In his years as a newspaper editor he had considered it improper to join a party but had voted for all three major parties.

Ms Brown said she was not a member of any party because it might compromise her position as the editor of a publication which regularly covers politics, but she came close to offering the Labour leader an endorsement: "Tony Blair's Britain sounds an exciting place and I would like to spend a lot of time in it."



Police yesterday outside the Essex farm where the bodies of Margaret Jarvis, and her sons Russell, middle, and Christopher, were found

PC's missing wife found dead with sons in car

Alan Watkins

THE missing wife of a police officer was found dead with her two young sons in the back of their family car yesterday after what friends and relatives said was a life beset by personal tragedy.

Yesterday friends of Mrs Jarvis - who had said she was so glad for a "second chance" after the death of her first husband - were dismayed to discover her marriage to PC Paul Jarvis, 35, had broken down.

Police said Mrs Jarvis had also suffered the loss of her other recently, Superintendent Storey added: "She suffered one tragedy too many. Which one we shall probably not know but the sadness of her death and the circumstances surrounding it have affected every one of us."

looked over the area with a helicopter but had not searched the garage. A spokesman said he was not in a position to name the prospective recipients, but they could include Belgium, Holland and Hungary.

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Britain hangs on to looted gold

Richard Norton-Taylor

SUCCESSIVE governments have refused to release millions of pounds worth of looted Nazi gold held by the Bank of England even though it was agreed years ago how it should be distributed, it emerged yesterday.

that the Albanian dispute was never an obstacle to the release of the gold. Some £30 million worth of gold looted by the Nazis has been held since 1947 in a special Bank of England account. A further £16 million is held in the US Federal Reserve. The accounts are administered by the Tripartite Gold Commission, consisting of officials from Britain, the US and France.

now. The figures emerged from a report on Nazi gold published by the Foreign Office on Tuesday. It raised questions, and the Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind has asked for further information about the Bank of England account before a meeting with the Swiss foreign minister next week.

It would go to foreign governments, but not to individuals. A spokesman said he was not in a position to name the prospective recipients, but they could include Belgium, Holland and Hungary.

Loyalist parties to stay in talks despite death threats row

LOYALIST politicians can remain at the Stormont talks in spite of death threats by their paramilitary wings, the British and Irish governments decided yesterday, writes David Sharrock.

the threat against Mr Wright, there was no evidence they endorsed it. The DUP deputy leader, Peter Robinson, said the implications were far-reaching. "It is an invitation to Sinn Fein to come through these doors without any change in the IRA's position," The DUP

will raise further objections when the talks reconvene on Monday. The cross-community Alliance party has meanwhile insisted parties of long-time support in July's Drumcree stand-off.

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Shepherd forced to scrap student bank loans plan

John Carvel
Education Editor

The Government was forced yesterday into a climbdown on student loans when Gillian Shepherd, the Education and Employment Secretary, admitted she was scrapping the "twin-track" scheme she put through Parliament earlier this year.

After months of abortive negotiations with Barclays and Clydesdale, Mrs Shepherd has dropped her plans for the banks to offer subsidised loans, worth up to £1,645 a year to most students, in competition with the Student Loans Company, which is backed by the Treasury.

Instead the Government will try to sell off as much as possible of the £2 billion owed to the loans company, and

contract out its administration. Douglas Trainer, president of the National Union of Students, said the Government was trying to reduce public borrowing at the expense of the interests of students. "We want an early commitment that any money raised will go to prevent the introduction of tuition fees and bring an end to student hardship, and not be used for pre-election tax bribes."

Six years ago, the commercial banks refused requests to participate in the introduction of loans, fearing they would share the unpopularity of the Treasury's decision to reduce maintenance grants. The Government was obliged to set up the loans company, based in Glasgow, to lend money provided out of public funds.

However the company was dogged by controversy, and

last year its chief executive was obliged to step down after an investigation into financial irregularities. Students complained of delays in getting loans, and repayments were slower than expected.

Last year Mrs Shepherd proposed easing the pressure on public resources by offering subsidies to banks willing to offer cheap student loans. At first she said the scheme would begin in October 1996, but shortly after publishing the necessary legislation she said it would be October 1997.

Yesterday she dropped the scheme altogether. Mrs Shepherd said the sale of outstanding debts would "bring benefits from transferring risk to the private sector, while the strategic contracting out of the current loans administration should in turn lead to improvements in service and effectiveness".

There would be no change in the terms for loans. "[A student's] right to defer repayments when their income is below 85 per cent of average earnings, and to have an interest rate linked to inflation, will be preserved. The fact that the debt is sold will have no practical effect on them," she said.

Bryan Davies, Labour's higher education spokesman, said it was the Government's fault its strategy had collapsed, since it had failed to sell it to the private sector. Labour would replace the present system with 20-year loans, repayable through National Insurance.

The Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals agreed that the current "mortgage-type repayment scheme should be replaced with a scheme which links repayments to pay levels".

Girl may have waved to killer

Vivek Chaudhary

A NINE-year old girl who survived an attack in which her mother and sister were killed may have waved to the attacker minutes before the killings, police said yesterday.

Josephine Russell has told police that she waved to a man in a parked car who then approached her and began attacking her mother Lin, 45, and her sister Megan, six.

Detective Chief Inspector Dave Stevens said police were still trying to discover in which order Josephine, her sister and mother and the family dog were attacked on July 8 as they walked through the Goodstone Park estate in Kent.

Josephine, who suffered serious head injuries in the attack and has only just regained her memory, is undergoing cognitive interviewing techniques to try and piece together details surrounding the murders.

Mr Stevens said: "Josie has said that she was walking home with her mum, her sister and her dog and that as she turned on to a woodland track, there was a car parked.

"In the car was a man, and as she walked by him she waved to him. She then continued walking and somehow this man got in front of them and she was attacked."

She also saw her mother attacked with a hammer. Police said forensic tests were continuing on a hammer found in the area.

Mr Stevens said: "I hope and pray this is the murder weapon but we cannot be sure for at least a couple of days."

Police plan to continue interviewing Josephine, who is only able to make limited conversation. They also plan to introduce a model of the murder scene and are using specially-adapted interviewing techniques and sign language to communicate.

Mr Stevens said: "We are having to take things very slowly, but Josephine obviously has a clear memory of the attack. She has seen an E-fit of a man seen near the murder scene and she had a strong reaction to that. She was obviously very frightened."

Mr Stevens also said police had eliminated a man named by 14 people following an appeal on the BBC Crimewatch programme.

'DIY language' fails to impress

David Sharrook
Ireland Correspondent

A CAMPAIGN for official recognition of Ulster Scots, the language of the Plantation of Ireland, has been dealt a heavy blow by the European Commission following a visit which failed to find a single speaker of the tongue.

In a critical report drawn up by 12 European delegates — who speak languages such as Breton, Irish, Galician and Friulan (from northern Italy) — Ulster Scots is damned as being "extremely close" to standard English. This is vigorously denied by enthusiasts who say *faur fa' ye, whit wey gangs ye*, in preference to "hello, how do you do?".

The plantation was a settlement of British families in the 16th and 17th centuries, on confiscated Irish land.

The report also rubbishes claims by the Ulster Scots Language Society — founded in 1962 to promote a revival — that there are 100,000 speakers living in an arc which stretches from the Ards peninsula in north Down, through Co Antrim and into north Donegal.

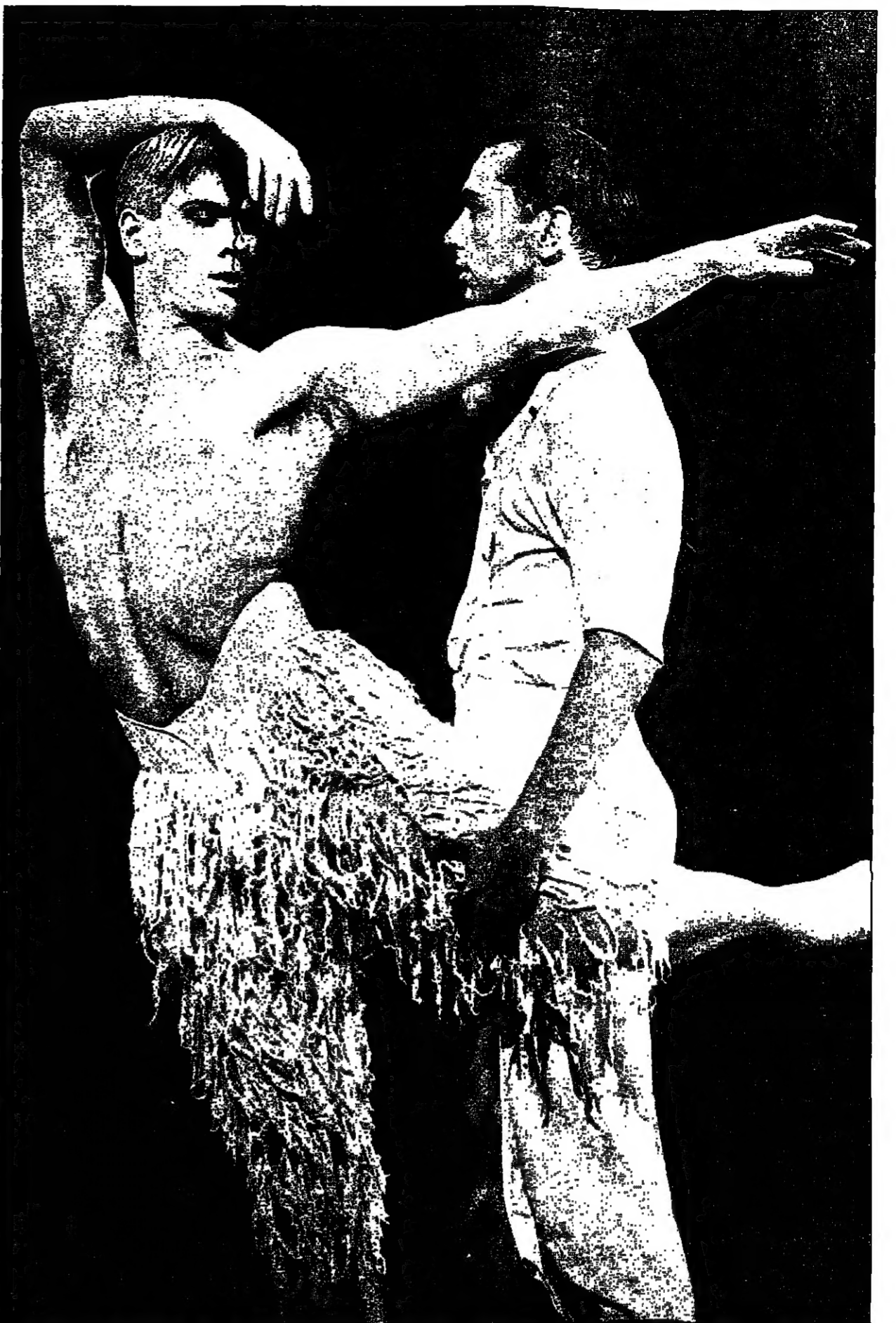
Written in French for the European Commission's Dublin-based Bureau for Lesser Used Languages, the report gives a sceptical account of the efforts of Ulster Scots enthusiasts in March to convince the delegates that the language was worthy of financial assistance.

It states that a demonstration by the author and "native speaker" James Fenton of 18th century Ulster Scots poetry had not convinced the team. A visit to Greyabbey's Presbyterian church, supposedly an Ulster Scots centre, proved a disappointment because the vicar was English.

"In our trip to the Ards peninsula we failed to find a communal language other than English or to find an open Ulster Scots speaker," says the report. It concludes that Ulster Scots is "the linguistic expression of a fringe of the Unionist community".

Campaigners claim that Ulster Scots is experiencing a renaissance with Oxford University Press publishing a concise dictionary, bilingual street signs and plans for an academy in Belfast. But a nationalist Belfast newspaper recently called it "a DIY language for Orangemen".

Classical ballet steps into West End as dance ratings rise



Adam Cooper (left) as the swan and Scott Ambler as the prince perform a duet in Swan Lake. PHOTOGRAPH: HENRIETTA BUTLER

Owen Bowcott

THE first classical ballet to run in a commercial West End theatre for 75 years — as its promoters claim — launched its premiere in London last night intent on demonstrating the growing popularity of dance.

Not since the Russian impresario Diaghilev staged *The Sleeping Princess* in the now defunct Alhambra theatre in Leicester Square in 1921, according to the show's publicists, has any com-

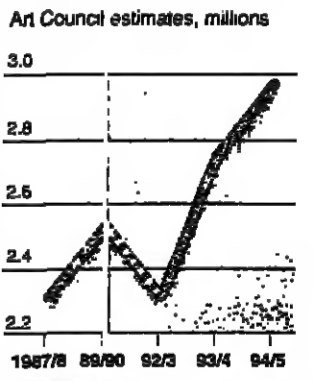
pany risked such a venture. But while the newly-choreographed production of *Swan Lake* by Adventures in Motion Pictures at the Piccadilly theatre — using male dancers in the lead roles — was being widely praised, some critics were yesterday warning *sotto voce* that its initial eight-week run might prove over-ambitious.

What is indisputable is the sharp rise in audiences recently. "There is a growing interest in ballet and dance," said the company's producer and manager, Catherine Doré. "People

used to think it was posh, but it's not. We want to be populist. We have kept Tchaikovsky's musical score and re-choreographed it. All the steps are different and the swans are played by men not women. It may sound odd, but swans are huge powerful creatures, not fluffy ducks."

The revised production has been supported by up to 400 private investors — known as "angels" — who have each stumped up £1,000. As backers of *Swan Lake*, they are hoping the crowds flock in.

Ballet audiences



Labour warning to NHS trusts

David Brindle, Social Services Correspondent

LABOUR government would close down hospital trusts not delivering acceptable standards of patient care, Tessa Jowell, the new shadow health minister, said yesterday.

Although Labour would inject more stability into the NHS by abolishing annual contracts for patient care, she said, there would be strict monitoring of standards. "If trusts cannot or will not keep up with the standards of the best, we do not want them to continue providing care for patients," she told the annual conference of the NHS Trust Federation in Birmingham.

Ms Jowell's address was the first policy statement by Labour's new health team under Chris Smith, shadow health secretary. She took pains to offer reassurance that the party was not planning upheaval in the NHS.

She said Labour's reform of GP fundholding would be "a long process", and freely referred to the future role of "trusts" — a term adopted by the Government and eschewed by previous shadow ministers.

"We don't want disruption and reorganisation simply for the sake of it, but only if it is justified and is broadly recognised as justified in the interests of better care," she said. Annual contracts between trusts and health authorities

would be replaced by "three-to five-year strategic agreements". However, that more stable system would not stop authorities taking work away from trusts failing to meet quality standards.

"Sometimes it will be painful, or embarrassing, but you would not expect us to commit ourselves to anything less," Ms Jowell said. Later, she explained that quality monitoring would be a continual process. Failing trusts would be helped to improve, but as a last resort would have strategy agreements cancelled. "We would expect health authorities to withdraw commissions from trusts not providing services of an acceptable standard."

Marco Cereste, the federation's chairman, who also chairs North West Anglia Healthcare trust, told the conference that trusts should not provide "shop windows" for politicians "looking for a soap-box to stand on" in the run-up to the general election.

He called on the Government to "sort out" the private finance initiative by which the private sector is being invited to build and manage new NHS hospitals. With no contracts yet signed, he said it was fast becoming the "pedestrian" finance initiative.

Ms Jowell said Labour would ditch the Government's version of the initiative, but would welcome private sector partnerships to design and build hospitals.

Big retailers plan 'drive-in' shopping to brighten grim car parks

James Melkie
Community Affairs Editor

AFTER the shopping mall with the airport or railway station attached... coming soon to a town centre near you may be a car park complete with more wide-spread, said companies calling for 24-hour use of car parks.

They pointed to experiments such as car valeting services in car parks in Nottingham and Stevenage, while electric buggies, also in Nottingham, help disabled drivers or people with heavy shopping loads to their cars.

The companies denied they are increasing the car culture and said poor parking deters people using town centres.

Marks & Spencer are among chains aiming to wrest control of town centre car parks from councils or big private operators.

Deals to allow parking for local residents and users of evening entertainment centres such as bowling alleys should also be more widespread, said companies calling for 24-hour use of car parks.

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Improvements, they said, would be part of a package including better public transport, more pedestrian-friendly zones and better security measures such as closed-circuit television to attract customers back to struggling town centres.

Shaun Boney, head of town centre planning for Boots, said: "Even car parks should be part of the shopping experience."

The reporter who hunted Rosebud in Citizen Kane was called Thompson. Orson Welles' new biographer is called Thomson. Are we any closer to what it all means?

Jonathan Romney

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Kurdistan Democratic Party fighters watch refugees head for Iran after Sulaymaniyah fell on Monday, but many have returned PHOTOGRAPH: NURI KAYMAN

Barzani pact bolsters Saddam's control of north Kurd victors make deal on autonomy

Sam Black
Diplomatic Editor

DWINDLING Western influence in northern Iraq suffered a further blow yesterday as the Kurdish faction back by Baghdad moved to make a formal deal on autonomy with President Saddam Hussein.

Iraqi opposition sources reported that Massoud Barzani, leader of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), was due in the Iraqi capital today or tomorrow to sign an agreement granting self-rule to the northern region.

Iraq's 3.5 million Kurds have made autonomy agreements with Baghdad in the past but returned to this arrangement will further bolster President Saddam after the West failed to intervene in Kurdistan and weakened the United States-led policy of trying to contain him.

Coming after an amnesty offer to Baghdad's Kurdish enemies, and the lifting of its five-year embargo on the northern provinces, the widely predicted autonomy deal was seen by opposition groups as another deliberate step to re-establish President Saddam's control.

"Saddam's actions are extremely threatening — they're catastrophic," a spokesman

for the opposition Iraqi National Congress said. "And his amnesty is not worth the paper it's printed on."

But things do appear to be going President Saddam's way: trade between Kurdistan and the rest of the country is expected to pick up, and the dollar has already strengthened against the US dollar.

Most Iraqi regular forces have withdrawn from Kurdistan since helping the KDP take Irbil from the rival Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) on August 31, although large numbers of agents of the feared *mukhabarat* secret police are still in the area.

The key question is whether, having used President Saddam to help defeat the PUK, Mr Barzani will be able simultaneously to keep him at bay, maintain Western support, and heal Kurdish divisions. This seems unlikely.

"Once Saddam is back, you can't play this kind of game any more," said one Western diplomat. "He will eat up the

north and inevitably reassert his dominance."

KDP officials say they want the Western humanitarian effort, under the aerial umbrella of Operation Provide Comfort, to continue. But foreign charities operating in the region are worried about their ability to function under Baghdad's control.

Many non-governmental organisations say they are concerned about Turkish-Iraqi collusion and the intimidation of local staff.

"All agencies are all going to have to decide whether they can carry on if Baghdad is in control," a Mines Advisory Group spokesman said.

Terry Giles of Save the Children said: "History has shown that the longer we are amongst the Iraqi Kurds cannot be understood. That is why we are calling upon the Kurdish authorities to reassure the local populations of their safety."

However, there were signs yesterday that the feared mass exodus of refugees was not going to materialise.

After the KDP captured the PUK stronghold of Sulaymaniyah on Monday, tens of thousands of Kurds streamed towards Iran, but many have returned home. Yesterday, 5,000 refugees set up camp on the Iranian side of the border after they said KDP peshmergas had killed four people.

'He will eat up the north and inevitably reassert his dominance'

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Tradition supports Mexico's new rebels

Phil Gunson reports from Atoyac de Alvarez on backing for guerrillas in a community that still likes, or needs, its heroes

THERE is no monument to Lucio Cabañas in Atoyac de Alvarez, the town in Guerrero state where his guerrilla struggle was born nearly 30 years ago.

But the legend of the rural schoolteacher-turned-guerrilla leader, whom local people respectfully refer to as "el profesor Lucio", seems as strong here as when he died at the hands of the army in 1974.

"As far as I'm concerned, he never was killed," confided one resident, voicing a common belief. "I believe he went to Cuba."

"It's the same with all heroes. His ideals are alive," added a local priest, Máximo Gómez, for whom the latest outbreak of guerrillas in Mexico forms part of a tradition stretching back to the independence struggle.

"It is utterly justified," said Father Gómez, who was present on June 28 when the previously unknown Popular Revolutionary Army (EPR) made its first appearance at a

memorial service for victims of a massacre near here.

It was, the priest said, "an agreeable surprise" to see that the people now have an army that's on their side.

The government describes the EPR as a gang of terrorists with no social base, a view echoed by the United States ambassador, James Jones, who on Monday offered Mexico intelligence assistance and training to combat the group.

But in these Guerrero communities they are not dismissed so lightly.

"If they exist, they must have support," said the mayor of Atoyac, Wilfredo Rojas. "If not, how do they feed themselves?"

While security forces waged a dirty war against Ca-

bañas's Party of the Poor (PDLP) in the 1970s, the mayor pointed out, the government suddenly started to pay attention to local needs. Roads, schools and clinics were built, and electricity and telephone services provided.

"The guerrillas achieved all this," Mr Rojas said.

After the war, during which

death of Cabañas and later merged with another small leftwing group, the Procup. These appear to form the nucleus of the EPR, perhaps with the more radical elements of the Chiapas-based Zapatistas.

In its first manifesto, the EPR leadership said today's circumstances were "similar to those which in 1967 and 1968 caused Comandantes Lucio Cabañas and Genaro Vázquez to take up arms against exploitation and oppression."

Not so, said Octaviano Santiago, who fought alongside Cabañas and is the leader of the left-of-centre Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) in Guerrero. "The detonator in those years was the struggle for democracy. There was no real opposition party back then."

The fact that Mexico is evolving towards a multi-party system, Mr Santiago said, means the armed

struggle is no longer valid or viable.

The PRD leader was present in 1967, aged 16, when police attacked a peaceful protest in Atoyac by teachers and parents calling for the dismissal of a headmaster. They killed nine people.

It was the turning point for Cabañas, who had addressed the meeting and narrowly escaped with his life.

In 1966 another group of demonstrators, on their way to Atoyac, was ambushed and 17 people were killed by police. Some see that incident as proof that little has changed.

Rubén Figueroa, who was forced to resign as state governor over the massacre but whose lieutenants still run Guerrero, is the son of the governor who oversaw the dirty war of the 1970s.

"The situation is desperate," Mr Rojas said. "In the miserable conditions these people live in, when someone arrives proposing armed struggle, the chances are they'll take up the offer."

The mayor is gloomy about the prospects: "This conflict can only get worse."

News in brief

Rebel Afghanistan militia take control of key town

AFGHANISTAN'S rebel Taliban Islamic militia yesterday said it had captured the country's main eastern town of Jalalabad only a few hours after it had been seized by government forces.

Government troops had entered the previously neutral city to stop the Taliban advance. More were being flown there as the attack took place.

An Afghan government spokesman accused neighbouring Pakistan of aiding the Taliban advance, signalling a return to frosty relations between the two governments.

The Afghan government claimed Taliban fighters entered the city from the Khogiani district to the west and from the border with Paki-

stan, which it accused of "hatching a conspiracy to wage war in Jalalabad".

Pakistan denies helping the Taliban and says it has no favourites among the Afghan factions, most of which it helped during the war against Soviet occupation in the 1980s.

The Taliban, which has had Kabul under siege for the past year, has pledged to install a purist Islamic order throughout Afghanistan if it comes to power.

It is now believed to be eager to attack Sarobi, a stronghold of the faction of the prime minister, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, about 40 miles east of Kabul and midway between the capital and Jalalabad. — Reuters.



An inmate at the alligator park in Beijing seals the fate of one of the chicks regularly sold for 16p each to visitors, who toss them to their deaths in the fearsome jaws of the insatiable beasts PHOTOGRAPH: GREG BAKER

Mass grave yields first body

WAR CRIMES investigators have removed the first of what could be as many as 280 bodies from a mass grave in Serb-held eastern Croatia.

William Haglund, the chief investigator, said: "We're going to have to wait until we've removed all the bodies and conducted autopsies to determine the exact cause of death."

Dr Haglund and his team from the Boston-based Physicians for Human Rights group began excavating the

site in a field near the hamlet of Ovcar, outside Vukovar, a week ago. They suspect it is the single largest mass grave in former Yugoslavia.

The people buried are believed to be non-Serb civilians massacred by a group of Yugoslav National Army (JNA) officers after the fall of Vukovar in November 1991.

The international war crimes tribunal in The Hague has indicted three JNA officers for the massacre, but Yugoslavia has refused to hand them over for trial. — Reuters.

Backlash fear in Bangladesh

Army soldiers backed by helicopters yesterday began searching for five people missing after tribal rebels in Bangladesh's Chittagong hill tracts killed 30 Bengali-speaking settlers.

The killings have raised fears of a backlash against the Shanti Bahini guerrillas who abducted the settlers late on Monday. — Reuters.

Wiretap claim

Palestinian police said yesterday they had dug up more than 10 wiretapping devices, connected to telephone lines leading to a police switchboard, which they accuse Israel of planting around their Gaza City headquarters. — AP.

Murder charge

A United States serviceman in South Korea is to be charged with the murder of a local woman found stabbed in a boarding house near a US base on Saturday, a statement said yesterday. — Reuters.

Iberian row

Spain yesterday accused Portugal of using excessive force in the shooting of two Spanish fishermen on Tuesday, when a navy vessel was chasing a

trawler fishing illegally in Portuguese waters. — Reuters.

Spain yesterday accused Portugal of using excessive force in the shooting of two Spanish fishermen on Tuesday, when a navy vessel was chasing a

Yeltsin can take heart

ACAUCASUS woman is ready — quite literally — to give her heart to Russia's President Boris Yeltsin if doctors should decide he needs a transplant.

Zinaida Bolyova, aged 46, who lives in the autonomous region of North Ossetia, close to breakaway Chechnya, made her offer yesterday to the local office of the pro-government movement Our Home is Russia. She asked that it be conveyed to the head of the country's top cardiological clinic.

"The Russian president must have a healthy heart and be able to work hard," she said. "He has to continue the course of democratic reforms and economic transformations which he has launched. It is not a self-sacrifice, but a common-sense civic act."

But the offer seems unlikely to be taken up. Mr Yeltsin said last week he had agreed to have heart surgery at the end of this month, but doctors claim it will be a relatively routine bypass operation rather than anything more complicated. — Reuters.

Herd instinct

Five wild elephants drowned in the storm-swollen Teesta River in West Bengal as they tried to rescue a calf that had been swept away in the current, the Hindustan Times newspaper reported yesterday. The calf survived. — AP.

Arabs edge closer to Iraq

Seymour Hersh in Jerusalem

THERE were worrying signs for the United States yesterday that Saddam Hussein's Arab foes were nudging towards repairing their rift with Baghdad. State department officials in Washington are increasingly concerned that the meeting of Arab foreign ministers in Cairo this Saturday will drive a further wedge in the international alliance against President Saddam.

The recent US cruise missile strikes against Iraq were loudly and unanimously condemned by the Arab League, prompting the Iraqi information minister, Abdel Ghani Abdel Ghafoor, to praise his

Arab "brothers" this week for their solidarity.

Some members of the league are now inclining towards a resumption of diplomatic relations with Baghdad, although full restoration is unlikely because Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, bolstered by US pressure and tempered by their recent experiences of the Iraqi regime, will resist such a move.

Qatar and Oman have already reopened their embassies in Baghdad. But most worrying for Washington are diplomatic rumblings from Cairo, where President Hosni Mubarak believes the time is fast approaching to repair links with Baghdad.

In Cairo yesterday, a foreign ministry official spoke of

"rehabilitating Iraq as a regional power to achieve regional stability and restore balance with other countries in the region."

The US secretary of state, Warren Christopher, will make urgent calls this week to urge the Arab League to stand firm to prevent the collapse of the Desert Storm coalition against Baghdad. Any public breaking of ranks could affect President Clinton's re-election prospects.

There has been a good fortnight for President Saddam. At the very least, the Arab League will repeat its criticism of the US — a move which Baghdad will interpret as evidence that the international coalition is crumbling.

Dole lowers aim in fight for moral high ground

Martin Walker in Washington

THE Republican Bob Dole relaunched his faltering presidential challenge yesterday, proclaiming a "moral crisis" and targeting the personal character of President Bill Clinton.

The campaign includes television advertisements in which the retired general Colin Powell declares Mr Dole to be "the better man".

The relaunch was focused upon Mr Dole by his former Republican colleagues in Congress, who told him yesterday at a crisis meeting in Washington that his lacklustre campaign threatened to bring him down along with the fragile Republican majority.

"If we have a meltdown, then I'm going to get worried," the Republican whip, Tom Delay of Texas, said after lobbying by Republicans who were elected with narrow margins in the party's 1994 congressional landslide.

Mr Dole's promise of a 15 per cent income tax cut, planned as the backbone of his campaign, has been widely criticised by economists and has gained little momentum with voters. A CNN-USA Today opinion poll yesterday showed Mr Dole 21 points behind Mr Clinton.

The stage seems set for a dirtier and more personal campaign, in contrast to Mr Dole's insistence at the party convention last month that Mr Clinton was "my opponent, not my enemy."

In the latest television advert, Mr Powell says: "Bob Dole is the candidate most qualified by his beliefs, by his character and competence to be the next president."

He continues: "There is a moral crisis in America. Drug use is up. The wrong messages are being sent to our youth."

The adverts have been created by Mr Dole's new team, Alex Castellanos and Greg Stevens, who were hired last week after his media

strategists resigned. Mr Castellanos is best known for an openly racist television advertisement for Senator Jesse Helms in 1990, which showed a pair of white hands crumpling a job application on learning that a black applicant had been hired through affirmative action.

Meanwhile, Bill Bennett, a drug policy co-ordinator under Ronald Reagan, has been recruited to the campaign. He gave the moralistic stump speech in Louisiana on Tuesday, introducing Mr Dole by asking: "What is more important than the character of our president?"

Mr Dole said a second Clinton term "would mean higher taxes and more teenagers using drugs, more government, a more liberal health care system, more liberal judges, an economy producing too few jobs, and more and more government all down the line."

Mr Dole added: "It's like a bridge to Little Rock, Arkansas, and send Bill Clinton back."

Texas Romeo and Juliet learn how to kill for love

Jonathan Freedland in Washington

LIKE a cruel mix of Natural Born Killers, Romeo and Juliet, and Top Gun, the bizarre story of two teenage sweethearts who murdered for love has transfixed the people of Texas.

At the drama's centre are David Graham and Dime Zamora, both aged 18 and recruits to two of the United States' elite military academies.

Model students from the small town of Mansfield, Texas, the pair have stunned the whole state by confessing to the murder of a 16-year-old who stood in the way of their love.

Mr Graham, a first-year cadet at the US Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, and Ms Zamora, a midshipman at the US Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland, have admit-

ted killing Adrienne Jones, a successful athlete who had a one-off fling with Mr Graham.

The motives for the murder were "his god, her anger and their passion for each other", police detective Alan Patton said.

The two had become lovers after they met at a civil air patrol party several years ago. Sharing a passion for aeroplanes and physics, they applied for their respective military colleges. This summer set their wedding for August 13 2000 — the day they were to graduate.

But last autumn Mr Graham slipped. He had a brief sexual encounter with Adrienne. When Ms Zamora found out, she demanded that the rival be removed.

So Mr Graham picked up Adrienne, supposedly for a date. Ms Zamora was hiding in the car boot and when they arrived at a

remote spot in Grand Prairie, Texas, she leaped out and beat her with an exercise barbell.

When Adrienne seemed about to escape, Mr Graham shot her in the head twice. The pair left her to die.

"The first thing out of our mouths was 'I love you,'" Mr Graham said in his confession. Ms Zamora had added: "We shouldn't have done that."

They nearly got away with it. A local youth was charged with the killing, but released in January after he passed a lie-detector test.

Even though Ms Zamora admitted the killing to Jay Guild, a fellow midshipman at Annapolis, he kept quiet, saying he, too, was "love-struck".

The story emerged last month, when Ms Zamora confessed to classmates at Annapolis during a game of "truth or dare".

Beryl Bainbridge sees the Titanic's maiden voyage as an adventure straight out of the Illustrated London News, a project grown out of naive Edwardian grandiloquence.

July 1996



Town's hunger is worst of war

THE skeletal, swollen-bellied children (pictured left) discovered in the western Liberian town of Tubmanburg show some of the worst symptoms of malnutrition seen in almost seven years of civil war, aid workers say. The children, 150 of whom have been evacuated to a special feeding centre in the capital, Monrovia, were among thousands of starving civilians discovered by aid workers in the town, which had been cut off by the civil war since February. Food is now being shovelled in by road. "This is the worst thing we have seen in the seven-year history of the war in Liberia," one worker with the United Nations children's fund (Unicef) said. The precise death toll is unclear but locals speak of up to 16 people dying each day before help arrived. Aid workers, who estimate that more than 80 per cent of the 35,000 population is seriously malnourished, say hundreds of hungry civilians have emerged from the forest looking for food as word of the relief operation has spread. Workers expect to find more pockets of hunger in isolated parts of the country. — Reuters.

Refugees prepare to cast vote for the past

Bosnian Elections

Julian Borger in Sarajevo

HURMIJA MUJIC is not sure what the Bosnian elections are about, but she has a hunch they will not change very much. Mostly, she wishes they would not make so much noise.

With two days to go before voting, cars have begun cruising the Sarajevo neighbourhood where Hurmija lives, bearing oriental music, trailing green flags and broadsheets with the slogans of the Muslim Party of Democratic Action.

Hurmija, aged 12, from Srebrenica, can hear them pass back and forth under her window, and she has already had enough. "SDA, SDA, SDA." She makes a bored face as she makes the monotony of the electoral process.

Hurmija has no easy escape from the din. A piece of shrapnel lodged in her spine has paralysed her from the chest down. It is difficult to get about, but not impossible.

The support of British charities (and several thousand pounds donated by Guardian readers) meant Hurmija could spend five months this year in a rehabilitation clinic in Oswestry, Shropshire.

The treatment was never expected to cure her — the shrapnel has damaged the nerve, and attempting to remove it would probably do more harm than good — but it has given her some independence and some hope. She can walk around her flat with the help of a lower-body brace, and her three sisters and brother take her to school in a wheelchair.

"It makes an enormous difference. She can go to school, and she can be with other children. And she goes to physical therapy. She has something to keep her back straight, so she can sit, and walk — almost everything she wants to," said Hurmija's mother, Ajkuna.

Since returning from Britain for the Mujic family has improved in other respects. They used to share their two-room flat with another refugee family. But the second family moved out recently to take over a formerly Serb-owned flat, and so Ms Mujic and the children now have the place to themselves.

Sergeant-Major Vic Ferguson, the British soldier who took Hurmija under his wing and organised her medical evacuation, stays in touch from Vicenza, Italy, where he is now based.

His crusade for Hurmija has snowballed into a permanent army-based charity, Kids in Difficult Situations (KIDS), which is now helping to find medical care in the West for Bosnian children with life-threatening illnesses.

But the family's situation, like that of the 400,000 other refugees in Sarajevo (40 per cent of the population) remains desperate. Since the end of the war, humanitarian rations have diminished.

Hurmija's sister Mejiva, aged 13, works as a domestic cleaner. But her mother has no job. The refugees from Srebrenica and the rest of eastern Bosnia are from farms and villages. They have few skills to help them survive in towns.

For Ms Mujic, there is little to do but ponder the past. Pictures of her husband and two eldest sons look down at her from the walls. They have been missing since the Bosnian Serb army captured Srebrenica in July 1995, and are presumed to be among the estimated 8,000 Muslim men and boys executed in the days that followed.

Ms Mujic hopes the elections will somehow pave the way for a return to Srebrenica, now in Serb hands. She has applied for an absentee ballot so she can vote in a Sarajevo polling station for a candidate in Srebrenica.

Others will take special buses into Serb territory to vote. But their polling station has been set up in a village eight miles south of Srebrenica, in the interests of avoiding clashes between the returning Muslims and the Serbs now living in their houses. There are likely to be protests when the Muslims discover that that will be the closest they get to their former homes.

There is less incentive to go now. The only hope was to win the municipal council, but the local elections have been postponed. Ms Mujic will vote for Muslim candidates on Saturday, and then again in the local elections, now expected in November.

"If we force the Serbs out, one way or another, then I will be the first back," she said. "I've had enough of being a refugee. We had some big fields near town, and a life there."

Hurmija has no illusions about the chances of going home. Her last memories of Srebrenica are from her emergency evacuation after a mortar was cut down by a mortar yards from the family house in October 1994.

"I don't ever want to go back. It will never be possible," she said, before lapsing into one of her customary long silences.

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The government has responded by threatening to adopt the former regime's method of handling township boycotts: severing power, sewage and other services.

Mrs Miller is undaunted. "I'm all for the new South Africa, but this is too much," she says. "Just because we've got a little money doesn't mean the government should have it all."

"We're not as soft as they think. They can cut off my water and electricity, but I'm not afraid to pee at the bottom of the garden, and they'll have to empty the pool to stop me washing."

Almost all Johannesburg homeowners — black and white — have received higher rates bills. But Sandton's residents face a sharper rise because the suburb's former local council kept rates artificially low by skimming routine services.

"Sandton ran economically for a long time by doing without a lot of things like street lights, a postal service and buses," says Brian Stolzenberg, the treasurer of Sandton Federation of Ratepayers.

"We were quite happy to

collect our letters from the post office or to trundle around in our own cars. And if our wives needed to get about we could buy her a little car too. There was no need for all these extravagant overheads like a bus service."

The protest wins little sympathy in Alexandra township, separated from Sandton by not much more than a dual carriageway. Many residents there are now paying their rates after years of boycotting apartheid councils.

Sandton may have elected to do without some services, but during apartheid, Alexandra had no choice: until recently, many homes were without electricity, running water or effective policing.

Sandton's extra payments are to be pooled in a redistribution fund to upgrade deprived townships, including Alexandra and Soweto.

Support for the boycott now includes big business.

But the provincial affairs minister, Mohammed Valli Moosa, warns Sandton's residents that they face hardships. "Black communities embarked on the boycott as part of the liberation struggle. It brought hardship to the boycotters and great costs to the residents themselves."

He does not believe Sandton's residents will manage. Others agree, wondering how they will cope with choked toilets and bathing from buckets when many seem lost on the maid's day off.

But Mr Stolzenberg believes they are up to it. "Let them try and cut the sewage off and they'll be knee-deep in you know what in their own council offices," he says.

STEPHANIE MILLER says that if the blacks can cope then she can too. If the worst comes to the worst, she will wash in her swimming pool.

Like many of her neighbours in one of Johannesburg's wealthiest white suburbs, Mrs Miller is refusing to pay her local council rates — a tactic favoured by black South Africans during the apartheid era.

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Isles enjoy rich reward for failing to concede

Jon Henley visits the Aland islands in the Baltic, a Finnish showcase of self-rule, in the last in a series on regionalism

AUTUMN comes early to Aland in the well-tended streets of its picturesque capital, Mariehamn (population 10,418), the leaves are already changing colour, and a chill Baltic wind tugs at the few remaining B&B signs left swinging outside painted houses.

The holidaymakers who come in their thousands from Finland and Sweden have gone, until next summer. It is time for the 25,000 inhabitants of the islands — correctly known as the "demilitarised, unlingually Swedish and autonomous region of Aland" — to prepare for more exotic visitors.

In recent years, this scattering of tiny, unpopulated islands at the mouth of the Gulf of Bothnia has welcomed delegations from Armenia, Northern Ireland, Wales, Moldova, Italy, Lithuania, Azerbaijan and Japan.

Two years ago, Argentina's foreign minister came to see if any lessons could be applied to the Falkland Islands. The Israelis have come often — with options for Palestinian self-rule in mind — as have the Hungarians, worried about their minorities in Romania and Slovakia.

"It's become really quite popular," said Lars Ingmar Johansson, secretary-general of the 30-seat Aland parliament. "We're known as the 'Aland model'. They obviously believe there's something they can learn from us."

On the surface, at least, there is. Since 1921, Aland has been an autonomous province of Finland, its status originally guaranteed by the League of Nations.

While the islanders campaigned until the mid-1950s for union with Sweden — to which they are far closer in history, language and culture — successive autonomy acts negotiated with the Finnish

government have, ironically, left them better off than if they had succeeded.

"Look at Gotland," said Peter Lindback, head of the islands' civil service. "That's another island off the coast of Sweden. It's the same sort of size, had the same sort of population, but now it's just a summer place — people from Stockholm open up the shops for July and August, then the whole place closes down. We run our own affairs, and we're a going concern."

Aland passes its own laws and sets its own budget in almost all areas except foreign affairs, the courts, and customs and tax collection — where Finnish laws apply. An MP elected by the islanders sits in the Helsinki parliament, and any proposed change to the autonomy act must be approved by the Aland parliament.

Bolstered by a strong tourism industry that brings in more than 1 million visitors a year, and a disproportionately large shipping fleet of about 70 vessels, the economy is thriving. Gross national product per head is about 25 per cent higher than the

European Union average, while unemployment stands at 4 per cent — less than a quarter of Finland's.

"Our autonomy was designed to protect our minority Swedish language and culture, to isolate us from the dominant Finnish influence — in effect, to build a wall around ourselves," Mr Lindback said. "But we're good at climbing walls."

After nearly 75 years of exploiting their special status to meet their needs, Aland's

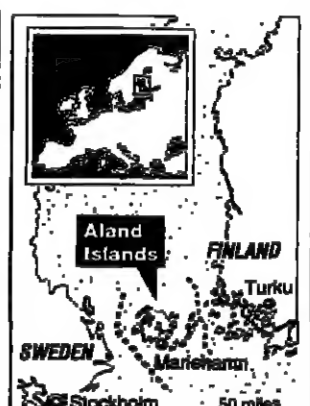
most successful piece of negotiation may have come last year, when it secured special conditions for itself as part of Finland's entry into the EU.

Aland has ensured that it will be outside the EU's tax union from 1998. From next year, it will also have a tax break with Finland — a headache for small businesses since 75 per cent of trade is with Finland, but a further guarantee of economic survival.

Most islanders say they would not now want full independence. "We could probably manage alone economically, but the price would be high," Mr Lindback said.

But as foreign dignitaries and fact-finding missions take the Aland ferry, many islanders also wonder if their formula can be exported.

"It's a pretty good model for us, and I think people can learn from it," said Barbro Sundback, a local MP. "But all countries are different. As the representative from Nagorno-Karabakh said, he'd love our arrangement — on condition Nagorno-Karabakh could prove to be an autonomous province of Finland."



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Whites choose township tactic

Chris McGreal in Johannesburg

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Sportscaster adds insult to China's Olympic injury

Andrew Higgins reports from Beijing

on the surging tide of nationalist anger set in motion by the chance remarks of US commentator Bob Costas (right) during the Atlanta Games this summer



CHINA has a new public enemy number one. He is Bao-bo Kesida — otherwise known as Bob Costas, a soft-spoken sportscaster on United States television.

Denounced in the official press, taken to task by the Chinese foreign ministry and pilloried on the Internet, Mr Costas has become China's most "ugly American" — the target of angry polemic and a fitting focus for a surge of nationalism encouraged by the 10th anniversary of the death of the Great Helmsman, Mao Zedong.

The unwitting descent into infamy of the US answer to David Coleman began in July at the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games in Atlanta. Commenting on the procession of athletes into the stadium for the television network NBC, Mr Costas uttered what some regard as little short of a declaration of war.

His remarks touched a raw nerve in a country still stewing over its failed bid to host the 2000 Olympic Games in Beijing and increasingly convinced of a US-led plot to thwart its emergence as a great power. Mr Costas apparently

greeted the entry of the Chinese Olympic team with the words: "Every economic power, including the United States, wants to tap into that huge potential market — but of course there are problems with human rights, property rights disputes, and the threat posed to Taiwan."

He later mentioned suspicions that some Chinese athletes may have taken performance-enhancing drugs.

No one in China actually heard the offending remarks. But, thanks to Chinese students living in the US and the official Xinhua News Agency, China has been whipped into a lather of indignation.

"He has gravely polluted the Olympic spirit and deeply hurt the feelings of countless television viewers around the world," thundered Beijing Youth Weekly in a four-page tirade. "Costas and NBC should have the courage to make a public apology for their loathsome prejudice and unfriendly acts."

The first blast of Chinese anger came in the form of a Washington Post advertisement featuring a lengthy protest letter signed by a student in California claiming to represent 70,000 "Chi-

nese scholars, academics, engineers, entrepreneurs and other specialists".

The network's foreign ministry jumped in with a formal protest. "It is hoped that NBC will draw lessons and make sure there will be no recurrence of things like that," it said.

NBC, whose parent company General Electric has hundreds of millions of pounds invested in China, tried to calm the storm with an apology for any "hurt feelings".

The network's vice-president for sports, Ed Markey, wrote a letter saying Mr Costas "did not intend any disrespect to the People's Republic of China or its citizens".

But the apology was denounced as "insincere" and "too short". A second advertisement, this time in the New York Times, demanded unconditional self-criticism from the sports-caster himself — both in writing and on prime-time television.

NBC's often chauvinistic coverage of the Olympics was widely decried by critics in the US and overseas. But only in China, where anti-Americanism has reached its highest pitch for many years, has the issue aroused so much sustained passion. "For the time being, there is no way in sight to calm down this incident," said Beijing Youth Weekly.

Instead of performing the Maoist ritual of self-criticism as demanded by his detractors, Mr Costas has opted instead for an all-American solution: he appeared on NBC's Tonight Show to defend himself, claiming that his Olympic commentary had been factual and pertinent.

China again took offence. "His remarks ignited new indignation among the protesters," fumed Xinhua last week.

Porn video splits Monaco royals

Alex Duval Smith in Paris

PRINCESS Stephanie of Monaco yesterday appeared to be living up to her family's habit of outdoing all other royal scandals when she was reported to be planning to divorce her husband after he was filmed frolicking by a pool with Miss Erotic Belgium.

Princess Stephanie's lawyer, Thierry Lacoste, last night refused to confirm that divorce was anything more than "a possibility". But her formal separation from Daniel Ducruet seemed increasingly unavoidable after an Italian porn channel showed him cavorting with a 26-year-old erotic dancer.

The royal palace in Monaco refused to confirm rumours that the princess's father, Prince Rainier III, had demanded the divorce. Mr Ducruet, a former fishmonger who met the princess when he worked as her bodyguard, has never won

Mafia 'link' made to Belgian scandal

Stephen Bates in Brussels

A MAFIA connection in the killing of the former Belgian deputy prime minister André Cools appeared to have been established yesterday.

The lawyer of Domenico Castellino, one of six men arrested in connection with the 1991 shooting, said his client had travelled to Sicily to recruit two professional assassins but that Mr Castellino had not known who was to be shot.

The political scandal has forced the resignation of four government ministers and Willy Claes, the former Nato secretary-general.

A judge in Liege ordered the suspects arrested last weekend, to be detained for further questioning, refusing an application for release by Alain van der Biest, a former regional government minister and protégé of Cools.

Mr Van der Biest's former chauffeur was arrested yesterday when he returned from holiday.

closer to Iraq

aim in fighting high ground

neo and Julie o kill for love

Friends but not lovers

The unions still have influence over Labour

IT WOULD be silly to suggest that the unions and the Labour Party are heading for the divorce courts on the basis of their spat during the TUC conference at Blackpool. But, equally clearly, Tony Blair means what he says when he pledges a future Labour administration to govern not for any sectional interest, but for the whole country. This is not just a pre-electoral bribe to win over floating voters (though, doubtless, it is that as well) but a fundamental repositioning of the Labour Party. The relations between Labour and its historic paymasters may never be the same again and it can only be a matter of time before some of the unions start pondering whether their continued funding of the Labour Party is the most cost-effective use of members' funds. Curiously, the unions are more influential with Labour these days than they think they are. Sure, the days are gone when the union barons thrust on the government of the day their views on everything from incomes policies (several of which were negotiated with Conservative as well as Labour administrations) to Christmas bonuses for pensioners. Gone too are the days when unions had nominees on every quango from the Bank of England down to the committee investigating the teaching of maths in primary and secondary schools (which in 1978 boasted Hugh Scanlon, leader of the engineering union, among its members). In those days some of the unions' biggest triumphs were negative as when the then Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, told the same Hugh Scanlon to take his tanks off his lawn after the unions forced Wilson to ditch Barbara Castle's union-reforming legislation in Place de Strife. If that legislation had been passed the political history of the last 25 years might have been very different. The unions have long since lost that sort of power, but their influence is still

considerable. Thanks to their efforts a future Labour government is pledged not just to establish a legal right to belong to a trade union but also to introduce a national minimum wage, a major piece of reforming legislation that will boost the wages of the low paid (depending at what level it is pitched) by billions of pounds. Surely that alone justifies most of the annual subvention from the unions to Labour. It shows that Labour still listens to the unions with a sympathetic ear—in contrast to Mrs Thatcher who contemptuously ignored not only the unions but also the Confederation of British Industry for most of the 1980s. Whether it is possible to represent the whole of Britain rather than sectoral interests remains to be seen but it is not an ignoble aim. And, as it happens, deciding at what level the minimum wage should be set will provide a good test case. The TUC was absolutely within its rights to suggest £4.26p an hour since that figure is not being imposed on Labour but is merely the TUC's pitch to Labour's proposed Commission which will also receive submissions from the CBI and dozens of other organisations. A decent minimum wage is the hallmark of a civilised society. Britain can afford to move towards the TUC's target, albeit in stages, without generating unacceptable unemployment—as long as trade unions don't seize the opportunity to restore their lost differentials—in which case we could be catapulted back into a wage-price spiral of inflation that could destabilise the economy whether we are in or out of Europe's single currency. Rights carry responsibilities. If the unions—and the employers—accepted and acted on this principle then New Labour's task of governing in everyone's interests wouldn't be half as difficult as it is going to be if there is a change of government.



Letters to the Editor

A dispute breaks out over unions

IT IS a pity you did not report what I actually wrote or said in your account of events at Blackpool. Unions see the over union policy fiasco, September 11. In my article and press release, I argued for a new climate of co-operation to prevent genuine disagreements erupting into disputes. I suggested that we needed to talk with unions, employers and consumers of public services about ways to resolve disputes before they turn into strikes.

I want to discuss how we can encourage binding arbitration to be agreed voluntarily as part of agreements between employers and employees, so that when there is a dispute about how an agreement is interpreted, ACAS can arbitrate. These are voluntary, not compulsory, agreements so the right to withdraw labour as a last resort is not affected.

Second, I wrote: "Where there is a significant new offer by employers, we must examine whether a fresh ballot of employees could take place—and we shall be taking soundings on this as a way forward." Labour's position on this was the same on Tuesday morning as on Tuesday evening. We want to examine whether this can be developed as part of a strengthening of ACAS without the need for new legislation.

There is a different lesson from this, however. The last Labour Government lost office after the "winter of discontent" of industrial action in 1978-9. Some trade-union leaders have since agonised that they were therefore responsible for the last four terms of Tory rule.

Taxpayers in a hole

THANK you for starting a debate on the forthcoming landfill tax (Letters, September 11). The problem with the principle of "the polluter pays" is that it is frequently difficult to decide who the polluter really is. The landfill tax may have minor benefits in persuading local authorities to move to less environmentally damaging forms of disposal, but what is really needed is a reduction in the amount of packaging that we throw away.

The solution here is not a tax on the disposer—who, as your correspondent points out, is often acting in the most environmentally responsible way possible—but on the producer. Britain's wealthiest individuals are makers of disposable packaging. Also wealthy are the supermarkets that use it. It is they, not us, who should meet the cost of cleaning up the mess caused by their activities. Simon McKeown, 10 Murdoch House, Mookdee Street, Rotherhithe, London SE16 1BJ.

FRANK Cooke's letter rightly points out some of the implications of the landfill tax for many waste carriers. However, there are ways to minimise the impact and re-using (which is of course what the tax was intended to encourage).

Most carriers already sort through skips to recycle materials before sending the remains to landfill. Several companies and local authorities offer composting services for green organic waste which is in general less costly than going to landfill. As to his point about an increase in fly-tipping, yes, it is likely, but a few high-profile prosecutions and punitive fines should ensure that it is no worse than at present.

It is crucial that more efforts are made to reduce the amount of waste that has to be dumped. Certainly in this part of the south the current landfill sites only have a few years left. Clearly strenuous effort needs to be made to reduce waste in the first place. This in part means making it more expensive to dispose of waste in environmentally damaging ways. Charlie Trousdale, KPS Compositing Services, Awbrook Park Farm, Ham Lane, Scaynes Hill, Haywards Heath, West Sussex RH17 7PR.

Rhodes and the descent into evil

Can the BBC's portrait project values and not mere images?

CECIL RHODES, in this newspaper's view, was a shallow patriot who did more than any other Englishman to lower the reputation of the British empire. That, at any rate, was our verdict on March 27, 1902, the day after he died in the closing weeks of the Boer War. G K Chesterton was much harsher: Rhodes had "invoked slaughter, violated justice and ruined republics." Opinions have fluctuated since then. Early editions of the Encyclopaedia Britannica praised him for saying that the British empire was a great force working for the universal good. The current edition notes critically his belief that the black peoples could never become civilised. Biographical opinion has ranged from Rhodes the Man of Vision to Rhodes the Arch-imperialist, with a middle view that he must be seen in the context of his time. How does the BBC's series, starting on Sunday, approach the subject? A production described by its makers as a "£10 million epic drama" is evidently not the same thing as a documentary, but with the emergence of a new South Africa it reopens a very relevant page of history at a particularly important time. It will clearly offer a superb visual experience: great pains have been taken to recreate authentic locations, from the shanty town at the Kimberley mines to the great kraal of the Matabele. Nor can a tale which embraces diamonds and gold, intrigue and deceit, conflict and empire-building, fail to make gripping

drama. Authentic records, we are told, have been used whenever possible. How far this adds up to an experience which is historically as well as dramatically enriching remains to be seen. The programme's creator Antony Thomas has described his years of research as a "descent into evil." Yet on the screen it can be hard to prevent an anti-hero assuming some heroic aspects: the BBC's publicity talks of his "breath-taking" vision and "unique charisma." Rhodes was one of a number of merchant-adventurers who pushed a not unwilling British government to extend its empire by means which were ruthless and treacherous. In doing so, it destroyed entire cultures: African history, in the words of Basil Davidson, became an "unknown continent" which we have to re-explore. Will this film—which the ANC is said to have approved—take us much further? It does show how Rhodes created the seeds of apartheid in the 1894 Glen Grey legislation, but the systematic dismantling of black society remains outside its narrative frame. BBC Education has produced a useful guide to some of the main issues, and there is a video-pack for schools on Cecil Rhodes and the Legacy of Empire. But most viewers are likely to stick to what they see. In an age of epic—and costly—TV drama, the challenge for their makers is to provide ideas as well as images which can capture our imagination. We must wait and see whether Rhodes is much more than a rattling good tale.

Biblical acts

GENESIS does indeed tell us that God created man in his own image, as Edward Johnson writes about Durham Cathedral's naked man image (Letters, September 10). But it tells us more: "God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." So God is plural. "In the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." So God is bisexual. This would mean very complicated genitalia, and could make even more interesting pictures. Nicolas Walter, Nationalist Press Association, 86 Islington High Street, London N1 8EW.

RECENT research has shown that this Genesis passage is the result of a faulty translation. It should have read: "Man created God in his own image"—including genitalia, of course. If God finds such redundant body-parts offensive, He knows who to complain to: Edward Johnson and his fellow creators. Philip Lloyd Lewis, 57 Mallard Road, Bournemouth BH8 9PJ.

OH come on. I delivered the first Christmas 96 shopping catalogue (Letters, September 6, 11) about 10 days before Christmas last year. Ian McRobert, 115 Park Road, Peterborough PE1 3TR.

WITH so much of the year now devoted to the anticipation of December 25, the time is ripe for a National Campaign for the Containment of Christmas. I suggest a boycott of every commercial establishment displaying tinsel or fake snow window-panes before mid-November. That is, if you can find any where else left to shop. David Jackson Young, 25 Dean Path Buildings, Edinburgh EH4 3AZ.

LAST year, Varsity (Cambridge University's student newspaper) reported several cases of illicit sexual activity in the University Library and that of Emmanuel College. Perhaps this is what Ian Sansom (Essay, September 7) is referring to when he talks about libraries, in such dreamy and romantic tones, as the final bastion of non-remote access resources. Claire Hibbitz, Girton College, Cambridge CB3 0JG.

Dangers of the Safety Net

HAVE been using the Internet since the early eighties (Venture aims to clean up pornography on the Internet, September 10). Most of the time it has been to send and receive messages from South Africa. The messages were often encoded and concerned the "subversive" activities of the African National Congress. On occasions the messages were from Nelson Mandela, then in jail, to the ANC leadership in Lusaka.

History has moved on. However, if the communications industry is not vigilant, unselected, self-serving people like Peter Daw will hinder the distribution of illegal material on the Internet. Not the courts, not Parliament, not the police, but big-brother Daw could decide that what we in the ANC did was "illegal". Nelson could still be in jail, with South Africa's freedom of expression under attack. Safety Net, founded by Daw, will offer "to build filters against pornographic and other types of material... Not content with a self-defined 'pornographic' (which perhaps could be generally agreed upon), 'other' types are added. Under the cloak of decency, what dastardly deeds are done. Ron Press, 112 Amberley Road, Little Stoke, Patchway, Bristol BS12 6BY.

Help this child

IT IS upsetting to see parents protesting outside a school at resources being spent on one 10-year-old boy (MP writes truce in boycott over disruptive pupil, September 11). Would we accept parents picketing a hospital to protest that a child with a serious physical illness, leukaemia say, was costing too much?

That parents should be concerned for the safety of their children at school is understandable; that they should protest when money is spent to help a child with problems is less so. When children are persistently disruptive or aggressive, it is generally a manifestation of significant anxiety with which they cannot cope—in effect, a symptom of a mental health problem. You are right to suggest in your leader (September 11) that prevention is better than cure, but when a mental health problem has not been prevented, it needs a response. Employing a supply teacher to provide one-to-one tuition may not be ideal but a 10-year-old-boy should be entitled to receive help without protest. Peter Wilson, Director, Young Minds, 102-106 Clerkenwell Road, London EC1M 5SA.

Referendum: an aye and a nae

I AM surprised at Hugo Young's views that the Labour Party's proposed referendum on a Scottish parliament with tax-raising powers is the result of panic about tax issues in general and that the party displays incompetence in Scotland. (Therapy needed for this tax neurosis, September 10). The decision to hold a referendum in Scotland and include the essential tax question illustrates rather than the issue was thought through just that we hit more cleverly this time around.

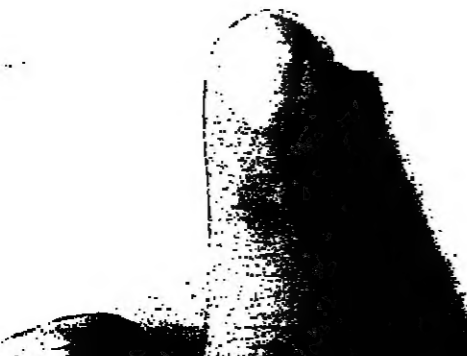
The Shadow Scottish Secretary must not cloud the issue by supporting further additions. A single-issue referendum would have invoked a lingering concern in Scotland that any form of independence would cost dearly. If the referendum indicates a clear desire for a devolved regional parliament for Scotland, and the Scots show that they are prepared to support this power only when it includes the responsibility of a reasonable tax contribution, any doubts concerning the

"unsettled will" of the Scots will be finally laid to rest. Maggie Thompson, The Roaring Mill, Glen Nevis, Fort William PH33 6TE.

THE most serious political crisis to affect Scotland since the last general election is the Labour Party's twists and turns on devolution—exposes equivocation and deceit on the single most important issue facing Scotland today: its constitutional future within the UK. It has squandered the sorely-tried loyalty of thousands of Labour supporters like myself. It also brings into serious question the political judgement and competence of Tony Blair.

A Country Diary

CHESHIRE: The local swifts departed more than three weeks ago, but the house martin colony under the overhanging eaves of the village hall is still alive with activity—there's a second brood to raise before they will take the long flight south to their wintering grounds in Africa. A pair of swallows, nesting in the barn on a farm just outside the village are also still feeding a young family, and I could hear their persistent demands for "more, more" as I passed on my way to the common. From the trees around the car park, a chiffchaff was singing but it was a very half-hearted effort, an end-of-season version of its repetitive call and there was no sign of the spotted fly-catcher. The autumn departure of most of our summer visitors is a much more leisurely affair than the rush of the spring arrival so the male blackcap



مكتبة النجف

Diary

Matthew Norman

WITH the eagerly awaited second issue of new Punch out tomorrow, concern mounts about that popular feature Ask Nigel, in which my so-called rival Nigel Donister of the now-market Dally Mail answers questions. Last week, he covered the entire range from Richard Ingrams ("an unemployed has-been") to the Waleses (the "nearly responsible" for their marriage), but this week he is scheduled to address readers' etiquette queries. However, it seems the page may be a little light by some bizarre twist of postal fate, several letters have been re-routed to me. "Dear Nigel," begins one. "My friend is being driven mad by having to work with someone whose notion of his job is re-jigging press releases about obscure stars, and writing puff pieces for minor aristocrats in the hope of ingratiating himself with his social superiors. What should he do? Yours etc. PD Acre, London W78. As Mr Acre's friends, we are passing the letter to Nigel without delay.

THE celebration of the 150th anniversary of the opening of Fakenham gasworks continues. Tomorrow (September 13th), the Community Centre in Oak Street will welcome a very special guest to tackle the broad topic "Gas in the 21st Century". How good to see Cedric Brown keeping busy in his well-earned retirement.

AFTER yesterday's item about Sir Bernard Ingham's imminent appointment as Diary Astrologer, word came back that he may already have a column of his own. Bernie, apparently, is the Sunday Telegraph magazine's highly respected star-gazer, Psychic Pamith. When we put this to him, back came the answer at enormous volume: "Oh, for CHRIST'S SAKE! I have absolutely NO BLOODY INTEREST in astrology!" said Bernie. "It's a load of RUB-BISH! I would certainly NEVER write anything about it! For Christ's sake, have you nothing better to talk about?" He then replaced the receiver. It's a very clever bluff, Bernie, but we're not buying it. You shall be our astrologer yet.

I AM overjoyed to learn that my friend Mandy Henderson has been reacquainting himself with his sense of humour. At a day-long pep talk for prospective parliamentary candidates ("parliamentary spokespersons", in the baffling new jargon) at Millbank, Mandy was at his wild-dream best. "I would certainly NEVER write anything about it! For Christ's sake, have you nothing better to talk about?" He then replaced the receiver. It's a very clever bluff, Bernie, but we're not buying it. You shall be our astrologer yet.

THREE days after an Independent leader begged us all to join trade unions (there is, as the paper pointed out, so much job insecurity out there), we learn of the versatility required of those few employees who survive there. When Andrew Marr, Gentleman Charlie Wilson's successor as editor, sacked dance writer Sophie Constanti in "the last round of restructuring" in May, he replaced her with... the crossword editor, Charles Levana. "There's a lot of doubling up of jobs," says Ms Constanti. "The architecture editor writes articles about BSE." The sooner Monty Montgomery and Mr Marr obey their own leader and start the NUJ, the sooner they can stamp out these practices, of which they so strongly disapprove.

SOME things must be allowed to speak for themselves, and we conclude today with a letter from the managing director of Mirror TV, which appeared in yesterday's Financial Times. "Sir, in your otherwise accurate article about talks between Live TV and Channel One, you stated that the weather forecast in Norwegian had been dropped in favour of a dwarf reading the weather while bouncing on a trampolines," writes Kelvin MacKenzie. "This is not the case. They are both working for Live TV but at different times."



As the TUC and Labour struggle with their relationship Larry Elliott calls on Blair & co to learn the language of government. Hugo Young, below, foresees conflict over demands after the election

Everyone's turn now

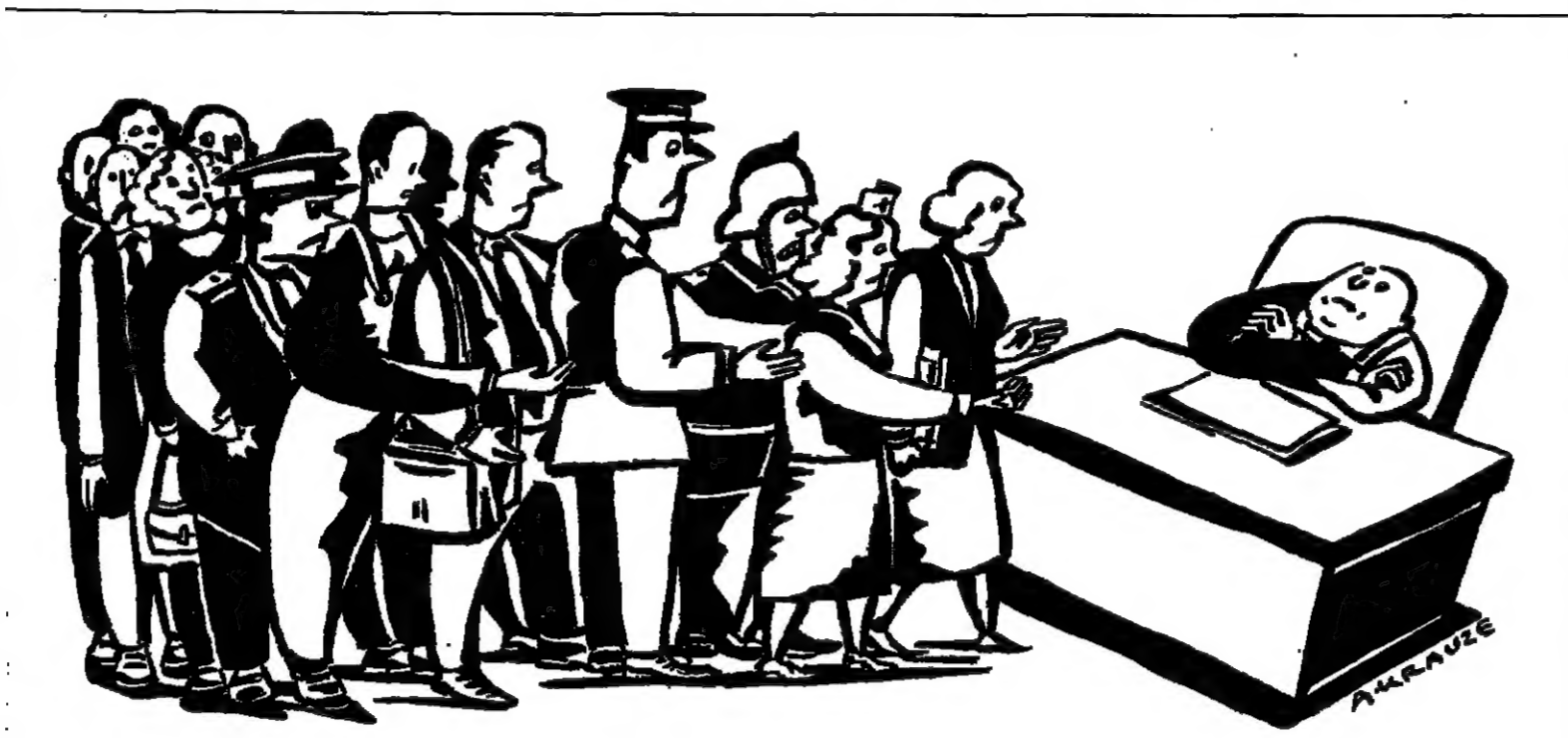
TO PARAPHRASE Humphrey Bogart in Casablanca, Tony Blair may come to regret this week's ill-considered attempt to outbid the Conservatives on trade union legislation: maybe not today, maybe not tomorrow, but someday soon and perhaps for the rest of his life. In the short term, the tiff will doubtless be smoothed over. Labour officials were privately admitting yesterday that the whole affair had been badly mishandled and that the next few weeks would be spent in the sort of consultation exercise that should have happened before David Blunkett started to shoot from the hip. The fun will really start if and when Labour wins the election. The scenario is fairly easy to sketch out and will be fraught with danger for an incoming Blair government. On the one hand, the incoming government will be com-

mitted to controlling inflation and keeping the lid on public spending. Gordon Brown has not spent the past four years parading himself as the Iron Chancellor merely to loosen the Treasury purse strings the moment he arrives in office. Even if he wanted to, he couldn't. The public finances are in a mess, and there is simply no scope for doling out large quantities of cash. The Conservatives are already homing in on this issue. David Willetts, the Paymaster General, was holding court in one of Blackpool's hostilities yesterday, making the point that Labour would find it impossible to square the circle between keeping the lid on public spending and paying for the minimum wage in hospitals and town halls. It would, he said, inevitably mean either higher spending and borrowing or cuts in services. He has a point. But, if this is one problem for

Labour, the other is that the current industrial unrest in the public sector is rooted in the three-year freeze on its overall pay bill imposed by Kenneth Clarke. Unions will be expecting Labour to deliver on low pay after yesterday's TUC debate, they have a figure in mind: 24.26 an hour. The new Prime Minister will only have three options. The first - to ignore his Chancellor and throw billions of pounds at the unions to keep them quiet - would be anathema. It would be Old Labour in spades, but even worse it could lead to serious repercussions in the financial markets - a run on the pound followed by higher interest rates. In theory, a second course of action - to take on the unions and show them who's boss - has its attractions. It would show the nation that Mr Blair was not in the pocket of organised labour. Mr Blunkett's call for

no-strike binding arbitration and compulsory re-ballooning in the event of an improved offer could be useful weapons for a Labour government trying to stop strikes in the public sector. But it's hard to think that Labour would really want a wave of industrial unrest, not least because it would suggest that very little had changed in the past 18 years. Labour says it has a plan for dealing with this seemingly intractable problem. Almost certainly, it will involve calling for the unions to be patient for just a little longer until a Low Pay Commission has set a level for the minimum wage and had it agreed by the Government. This will be less - much less - than the unions are currently looking for: not more than 23.50 an hour in all likelihood. Labour will try to keep the unions onside by setting up a shadow Low Pay Commission

made up of unions, employers and academics - to start deliberations even while legislation is going through Parliament. But this strategy sits uneasily with macho attempts to up the stakes on industrial legislation. Indeed, it would be hard to think of anything more likely to inflame the unions representing the low-paid. This week's events show that Labour is still thinking like a party of opposition. It wants to protect its flank against Conservative claims that it is soft on the unions at a time when it should be looking ahead to the problems it faces in government. During yesterday's debate on the minimum wage there was much talk of safety nets for the low-paid. Mr Blair should take note. Whatever happens, it will be a high-wire act for Labour in office; he is the one who need all the support he can get.



Time to lose the habits of opposition

Commentary

Hugo Young

THE Thatcher Government's first executive act in May 1979 was to approve a massive pay increase for the police. It, too, had armchair revolutionaries in mind. Singing out the agents of the civil power was a far-sighted defensive manoeuvre, not well recognised at the time, which prepared the barricades against forces whom ministers thought likely to be affronted by their policies. It established the terms of trade with the new government's enemies. Tony Blair's so-called warnings at the TUC do something similar, but more obviously offensive. They give notice to people who think he will be their friend. Friends are more necessary, but more difficult, to level with than enemies. In any case, after 17 years acute enmity, friends who expect the earth, Blair's pre-emptive position has the merit, over Thatcher's device, of costing nothing to the public purse. The static on this week's air-waves matters more than

the detailed message. Much was made on Monday of alleged inaccuracies and contradictions over when and how a Labour government might contemplate new laws to deal with arbitration, re-ballooning and the like. Apart from grossly exaggerating their discoveries, these searches for a difference between Mr Blunkett and Mr Blair missed the point. The point was to remind the brothers and sisters that, while there is always room for discussion, this new government is at least going to have a decent shot at a strategy that does not start with the politics of exclusive comradeship. In Blair's mind, such a message can hardly have seemed controversial. It is the only position to take, both in logic and in politics, at the apex of his leadership. Having spent two years trying to wean the Labour Party away from its old power-structure, he needs to signal that it will get something out of such a disengagement. Making clear, with whatever obscure formulations, that trade unions should not expect to be exempt from scrutiny if they start becoming socially dysfunctional is an elementary precaution. But this is only the leading edge of the challenge that a much broader constituency than the unions has to learn how to handle. Somehow we liberals have to change the psychology of opposition into

the psychology of government. Another way of putting this is to ask how the cynicism and disappointment of 17 years, all of it conveniently associated on the ever-available Tory government, can be transformed into a measured realism and modesty of expectation when the familiar scapegoat is suddenly whisked away. Those 17 years have produced an army of interests which consider themselves to have been neglected and deprived. If not outright punished, by Thatcherism. Through the prevailing scepticism about all politicians the light of hope in Labour still darkly shines. A Labour Westminster and Whitehall will produce a culture shock for which the nation's psychology is perhaps less prepared than its politics. At last this is our crowd, they will be saying in the pressure groups for families, for mental health, for the overseas poor, for better roads and rails and pensions and schools, and not least for the rights of organised labour. It's our turn, and we can't wait to make it count. ON the left more than on the right, moreover, such pent-up expectations of a coming break-out must be factored into the typical state of mind. The Anglo-Saxon left has always found it easier to criticise than to choose. Opportunism is its natural

infirmity. Lefties are more embarrassed to be led, more reluctant to comply, more determined to defend the holy grail of principle, more attached to differences that don't necessarily have much distinction. That's the intellectual habit of the left and, until recent aberrant developments in the Tory Party, could be said to define Labour as occupationally hostile to the kind of compromising mentality, eyes for ever on the main chance, which Conservatives have always understood to be the basis of successful government. All these traits have now had half-generation to grow and fructify. As a matter of fact, I don't believe this has happened to the extent that it might have. Excessive zeal is less prominent in the discourses of the modern left than caution and, dare one say it, a certain blank humility when faced by the intractable problems to which socialism no longer offers a categorical answer. But that hardly makes the prospect any less bleak for the future. The habit of opposition, pumped up by great expectations and underpinned by few ideological certainties, is what will define the Labour Party's condition when Mr Blair is called on by the people to effect its psychological shift into a governing machine. The way he's going about it, most obviously at the TUC, may not work. Some people will find his repudiation of the unions' ascendancy, even in matters that are entirely to do with trade-union affairs, shockingly naive. It is not as if Bill Morris is making a bid to force a Labour government's hand on the trade deficit or the Vietnam war, as his predecessor's intransigence and every right to do to Harold

Wilson. There's also the question of money. For how much longer can the trade-union movement be expected to continue financing a political party if that party explicitly rejects the primacy of the movement's interests in the narrow field of employment law? What Mr Blair has had to say this week by no means excludes the likelihood of a trial of strength once he is in power. LIKEWISE with other sectional interests. Unless we are to declare all social and economic difference between the parties to be extinct, some kind of preferential option for the poor and needy is a priority everyone is entitled to expect to be revealed. After 17 years without pretence to such a thing, the system will be awash with legitimate demands. After 17 years watching a government that has ruthlessly favoured its own supporters, many may find it hard to endorse a government which proposes to define its constituency and its obligations in a less sectarian way. Yet if New Labour means anything, that is part of what it means. Becoming the party of Middle Britain is the only way it can become a party of government. That means cutting loose from the confines of the past. If, as a result, trade unions cannot stomach their demotion and begin to withdraw their political money, then the Blair logic says, so be it. It won't happen, and it won't happen until he has had his first chance to show what his kind of government means. Such a government must, in the end, be boss. It is the only agency through which reality can be imposed on 17 years' frustration, and now is not too soon to start.

Teachers have special needs, it seems



Meg Henderson

BECAUSE my father was a Roman Catholic it was decreed that I attend a convent school, though quite why I should have been obliged to take his religion any more than his politics, I never understood. My mother, though, was a Protestant who refused to convert, which meant that one side of the family was Catholic, and the other, the quality half as it happened, was Protestant. So it went against the grain somewhat that at school the maths teacher started her lessons with an earnest prayer that my mother would see the light before she died and join "the one true faith". This, plus a predilection to debate every issue something the nuns attributed to "communism", was the start of my lack of respect for teachers. There were exceptions of course, good, decent people committed to helping children, though only a very few. But with the passage of time you expect attitudes to change; and when I began fostering and adopting children I expected that teachers must have changed too. I had this naive idea that they were in the job because they liked children. Did I say naive? Stupid, that's the word. The children I cared for were sad, damaged and often abused, and the problems they created regularly drove me to despair. But most depressing of all was the teachers' attitude. Unfortunately there had been little change since my schooldays. Their main interest was in the brighter children, and those who caused them trouble were seen as "disruptive"; this wasn't about humanity, this was business. When faced with children in desperate trouble through no fault of their own, their reaction was "Get these monsters out of my school!" Looking at our confused and confusing (but perfectly pleasant and biddable) daughter, one shining example of the teaching fraternity stated with palpable distaste: "I didn't train to teach the likes of that!" When I raised the hypothetical spectre of the custom-built ramp into the school being used by a child in a wheelchair someday, there was widespread panic. The headteacher hastily drew up a code of conduct. Teachers, she decided, with the backing of her staff, did not have to have children in their classes whose appearance might upset them. Pshaw! That was the Down's-syndrome loophole closed; and where that left

ginger-haired kids is anybody's guess. Being naive I couldn't understand why anyone interested in children could fail to respond to those so in need of their help, so in need of special teaching skills. Why, I wondered, were the teachers, in various parts of the country, hellbent on getting these children out of the school, instead of campaigning for the educational help they needed to keep them within mainstream education? Education officials preferred to keep "difficult" or "disruptive" children in special schools, rather than spend money on equipping mainstream schools with trained special-needs staff. But education officials were bureaucrats, they didn't have hands-on experience, they weren't in the job because they were interested in children. Almost every child will need specialist help at some time, so every official should already have this provision. Indeed, before the Tory education revolution, there was a separate budget for special needs, though for "specialist teacher" was hanging around, which meant that children who needed more continued to get less. So legally binding Statements of Needs were introduced, listing a child's difficulties and what the local education authority must provide to address those needs. But all over the country, the law has been ignored, because no extra money was given. And when children in difficulty as a result became difficult children, did the mainstream teachers threaten to strike in protest at their plight? Hell no, they were too busy striking to get the little blighters out of their hair. SO here we have the latest example, the third in recent months by my calculation, Matthew from Worktop, who caused his school to threaten strike action unless he was expelled. The compromise was that he should be taught in isolation by a supply teacher, and now the parents of his schoolmates are withdrawing their children. They object to the cost. "They're taking our children's money for him to be taught one-to-one. Why should we suffer for one child?" said a mother, because these days special-needs provision, such as it is, comes out of the general school budget. The Tories are gradually achieving their divided society, where there is no society, with everyone responsible for themselves and their ills. Survival of the fittest, where the weakest go to the wall, because there is a 10 per cent wastage in everything, including children. Aided and abetted by those child-orientated golden hearts I remember so well from my own schooldays. All together now: let's hear it for the teachers.



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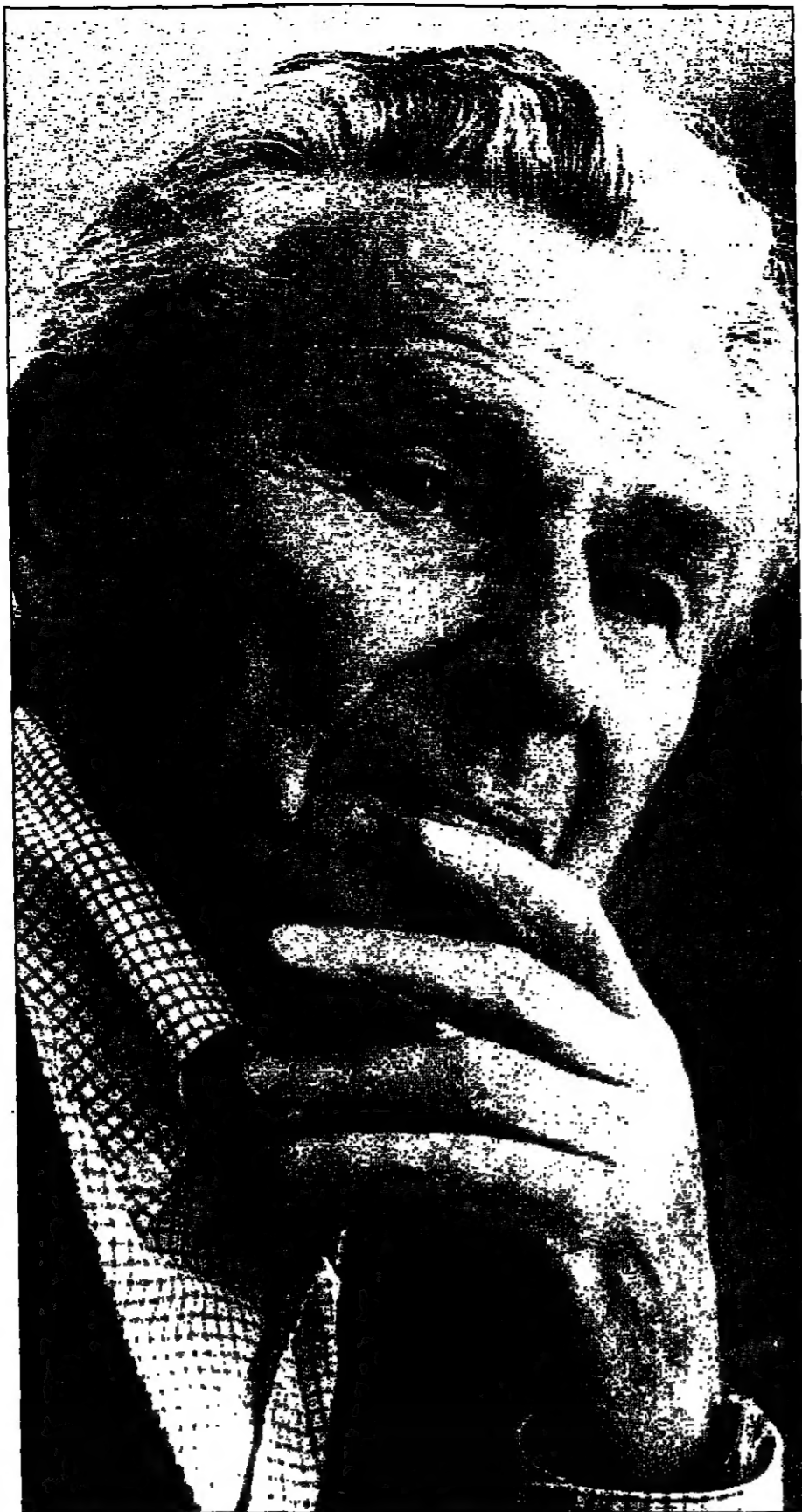
Market forces and the aphrodisiac rhino brew

Andres Gomez-Lobo has a plan to help the rhinos being slaughtered for their horns: flood the black market now

LAST week, the world's largest haul of rhinoceros horns was recovered by detectives in London. Yet it seems that the authorities are not quite sure what to do with the horns. Mr Schofield, the officer in charge, declared: "If we can't find a museum to take them on they will have to be destroyed. I would urge those responsible at least to consider a third option: selling the confiscated horns and thus flooding the market for a period. Besides generating financial resources that could strengthen the campaign against the trade in endangered species, it would help save the lives of rhinos currently under threat. Poachers, and the

ignorable traders who form the backbone of this illicit trade, clearly respond to economic incentives. If not, why are they willing to take the risk that it will get something wrong with the argument above. The crucial difference is that, in the case of drugs, it is consumption that the law is trying to prevent. In the case of endangered wildlife, however bizarre and repugnant we Westerners might find the consumption of rhino-horn powder, it is the lives of the animals that is the overriding priority. Many people might find it contradictory that the authorities in charge of limiting the trade in these illicit goods would be acting as traders and sellers. It might seem as if these agen-

cies had suddenly become marketing companies for the goods they were created to control. Would this not increase consumption and thus lead to greater poaching in the future? There would initially be increased consumption due to the lower prices, but this would not be at the expense of the rhinos, since the extra consumption would be supplied from already poached animals. Habit formation might be a more relevant problem if, due to lower prices, new consumers got hooked on the alleged aphrodisiac properties of rhino-horn's brew. But, in a market for such a strange product as rhino horn, it may be that it is precisely the high price and scarcity of the product which make it attractive. Is not a high price a sign that it is a precious material? Thus a lower price might take away some of the

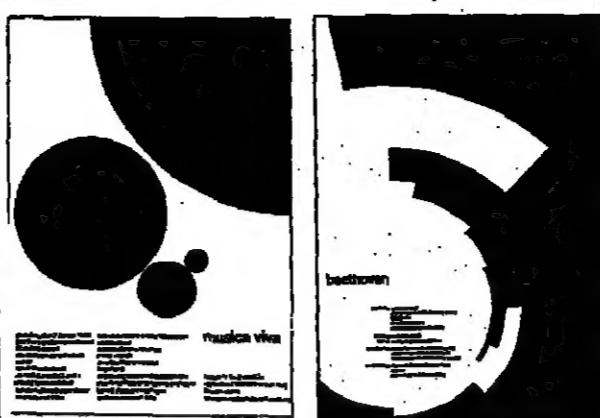


Müller-Brockmann... pioneer of Swiss graphic style and an influence on the Guardian

Josef Müller-Brockmann

Clearly a designer

JOSEF MÜLLER-BROCKMANN, who has died at the age of 82, was a leading pioneer of the "supranational anonymous form language" known as the Swiss style of graphic design.



His office became a Mecca for admirers. Arriving at Zurich station partisans of modernist design were instantly set down in a graphic world cleansed by him

Born Josef Müller, the seventh of eight children, Müller-Brockmann was brought up by his widowed mother. His father, a business contractor, though Swiss-born, was Austrian.

designers of the 1920s and the French affichistes. Now he began to apply himself seriously to typography and photography, abandoning illustration in favour of photographic images and geometrically-controlled compositions.

qualities, and his geometric and typographical constructions advertising concerts and exhibitions dominated the poster sites. In 1957 Müller-Brockmann took the place of Keller at the Kunstgewerbeschule. It was here that he met the young Hans Holzer who suggested visiting Müller-Brockmann at the school.

collence in the first history of graphic design, published in 1971, followed by two histories of posters. Although he established an advertising agency in his name, he was unimpressed by the difficulties of controlling the output of a large staff.

Ray Coleman

From Beatlemania to biography

SINCE the advent of the Sex Pistols, the relationship between pop musicians and the journalists who record their careers has been characterised by a sort of mutual contempt, often to the benefit of both parties.

rough edges, to soothe the abrasions, to forgive the trespasses. Coleman was born in Leicester. After learning his craft as a reporter with the Manchester Evening News, the Brighton Evening Argus and the Leicester Evening Mail, Coleman arrived in London in the early 1960s to join the Melody Maker as a reporter.

Ray's instinct was to smooth away the rough edges, soothe the abrasions, forgive the trespasses. Coleman was born in Leicester. After learning his craft as a reporter with the Manchester Evening News, the Brighton Evening Argus and the Leicester Evening Mail, Coleman arrived in London in the early 1960s to join the Melody Maker as a reporter.

When McCartney wanted to scotch rumours of a Beatles reunion, he wrote to Ray's letters page. Coleman loved the tradition of the Melody Maker, which had been founded in 1926, and was presiding over the celebrations of its golden jubilee when the first notes of the punk movement sounded in London.

Richard Williams. Ray Coleman, journalist, born June 15, 1937; died September 10, 1996. Coleman loved the tradition of the Melody Maker, which had been founded in 1926, and was presiding over the celebrations of its golden jubilee when the first notes of the punk movement sounded in London.



Ray Coleman in his days as Melody Maker editor

Birthdays

- Maria Aitken, actress and stage director, 51; Nicholas Barber, principal, actor, 58; Chilli Bouchier, actress, 87; Col Sir Donald Cameron of Lochiel, 26th chief of the Clan Cameron, 96; David Goodhart, writer, 50; Roger Goodwin, 40; Ray Gravell, footballer, 45; Linda Gray, actress, 55; Wesley Hall, cricketer, manager and Caribbean politician, 69; Scott Hamilton, saxophonist, 42; Prof Ronald Heald, educationist, 79; Ian Holm, actor, 68; Freddie Jones, actor, 68; Donald Lushman, rugby footballer, 37; Patrick Mower, actor, 65; Gerard Presencer, jazz trumpeter, 24; Rt Rev Alan Rogers, Bishop of Mauritius, 82; Molly Samuel, martial artist, former world karate champion, 35; Rt Rev Frank Sargeant, head of staff, Lambeth Palace, 64; Han Snyd, doctor and writer, 79; Max Walker, cricketer, 62; Rachel Ward, actress, 28; Prof George Zarnacki, art historian, 61.

Death Notices

ROBERTA (Belle) Abbott, on September 10, 1996, at the age of 82, after a long illness. She was the wife of the late Robert Abbott. Buried in the family grave at St. Andrew's Church, London. Relatives: Mrs. J. Abbott, London. Funeral Directors: Tel 0161 428 2047.

Jackdaw



Leg or breast? IF MODERN anthropologists deny cannibalism ever existed, it can only be because they find it too distasteful to be true. Exactly why it should be so distasteful is not entirely clear.

killing people becomes easy, then eating them becomes economic sense. Which is exactly what happened in a colonial war in the eastern Congo. In 1892, a Maniema chief Ngongo joined forces with the Belgians to attack a group of Arabs who had moved from Zanzibar to the shores of Lake Tanganyika.

The one recipe that crops up most often is smoked fish, particularly haddock. In the Congo, the king of Belgium once received several hundred baskets of the things as a tribute. The popularity of smoking indicates that humans are indeed a delicacy: something to be saved and savoured at leisure.

Daddy's girls 1. INTERCHANGEABLE pony names. But don't be jealous: You too can create your own top-about-town pseudonym. For a posh surname, see your computer's printer. Then grab a dinky lingerie catalogue and stick in a pin at random to discover your first name.

they are actually doing anything. Tara Palmer-Tomkinson is reportedly "very hurt" by the accusation. But she's OK, as she can tell us all about it in one of her newspaper columns.

Smart new magazine! Minx... society girls

Absolutely no ABSOLUTE Beginners (1996) Low point: Patsy, David Bowie, Ray Davies etc. Dune (1984) Low point: Sting in a cocoon.

Emily Sheffield like an oversized nappy. King Kong (1976) Low point: Hard to pick between the man-in-the-suit stomping through an obviously miniature city or the full-size Kong that cost a fortune and is only featured for about ten seconds.

Handwritten signature or note at the bottom of the page.

Financial Editor: Alex Brummer
Telephone: 0171-239-9610
Fax: 0171-833-4456

Finance Guardian

Labour assault on utilities

Aim is 'fairness and efficiency'

Simon Beavis, Sarah Ryle and Chris Barrie

LABOUR yesterday set out a package of tough measures to crack down on the privatised utilities, including "swingeing" fines for companies failing to deliver secure supplies.

raised doubts about Labour's commitment to scrap the system of inflation-linked price caps on the utilities. Labour only said that the introduction of a new system — where consumers would get a share of excess profits — was "one possibility".

sumed that it would try to raise around £3 billion. The party's proposals were published as the National Grid slammed proposals for tough price controls mooted by the electricity industry watchdog, Professor Stephen Littlechild. The Grid said the proposals were "too harsh, inconsistent and based on ill-founded assumptions".

Labour's measures form the cornerstone of a 62-page industrial strategy document being sent to constituencies before the forthcoming party conference where delegates will be asked to endorse it.

with business ever undertaken by a political party in this country". It would help to deliver a "strong, dynamic, vibrant economy".

For the first time the document brings together proposals for reform of price capping with separate ideas on how to stop the utilities slashing investment in their networks.

It proposes "swingeing penalties" for companies failing to supply customers securely and suggests that the utilities should insure themselves against the possibility of paying compensation. The latter move is designed to reward companies with a good track record in serving customers, since they could demand cheaper premiums.

In an attempt to increase the accountability of the regu-

lators, Labour suggests it could require the watchdogs to work with a board of non-executive directors with minutes of meetings published.

More radically, the party wants the regulators to make public all documents supplied by the companies about their monopoly businesses to the regulators, including "all records, reports or memos".

The document says Labour's proposals are designed to achieve the twin objectives of "fairness and efficiency" in the utilities.

changes might be introduced in the 18 months after the election," he said.

A leading expert on privatised utilities and regulation warned that the companies were disguising the true extent of their profits. He suggested that the companies would rather see a windfall tax than the introduction of new-style price caps.

"There have been claims in the City that electricity and water companies could afford a £5 billion tax, which means that £7 billion is affordable." Gas industry watchdog Clare Spottiswoode has proposed that 1.5 million households in Dorset, what used to be Avon, and south-east England should be free to choose their gas supplier from January.

Notebook

L&G's law of large numbers



Edited by Alex Brummer

THE REALLY big number, likely to throw everyone into confusion when legal and general results are released today, is the £1.4 billion that will pass through the company's profit and loss account. In essence this huge sum is an endowment arising from 160 years of writing life policies, which has been locked up in L&G's accounts as a result of its Articles of Association. A change proposed in the 1985 annual report and recently approved now requires L&G — under Stock Exchange rules — to take this sum through its accounts into reserves where it can be used to reward shareholders and policyholders as well as build on to the business.

Legal & General will be the first among many financial groups in the coming months, including Colonial Mutual, the Norwich Union and the Alliance & Leicester, to be making payouts to their stakeholders as they simplify and modernise their financial structures.

As far as the rest of Legal & General's figures are concerned, the underlying first-half results should be quite encouraging given the strong new business figures it has already reported (up 56 per cent in the UK) and the culling of its sales force, as it develops alternative distribution channels. But nothing as exciting as the prospective bonuses.

Clarke's plot

THE Chancellor Ken Clarke seems set to turn his unpopularity in large sections of the Tory party on its head. The economy he is guiding towards the general election next year looks in remarkable shape. While the labour movement squabbles over the minimum wage in Blackpool, the Tories are having some success in turning about the record levels of unemployment created in the ERM period.

The 16,000 drop in August unemployment means that the jobless rate has now dropped in all but two of the last 24 months and now stands at 7.5 per cent of the workforce, the lowest level since March 1991. From the Chancellor's point of view it is not coming down better, skelter, as in the United States, but evenly. Moreover, if this steady improvement could be maintained to election day then the Tories would be able to go to the polls with the jobless rate back below the 2 million level — not what was expected. Thatcher, but astonishingly good by European standards.

Moreover, at first blush, average earnings look rock steady at 3.75 per cent, thus dispelling the immediate in-

flation fear. However, beneath the surface there are some slightly more worrying trends, which will no doubt be seized upon by the inflation-watchers at the Bank of England.

Although pay settlements nationwide have stabilised around 3.5 per cent, above trend growth and shortages of skilled workers in certain sectors could turn the average earnings figures into a prices danger signal.

In the face of good headline inflation data forecasts for today this may seem inconsequential. Not, however, for everyone. There is still concern in the financial markets at monetary policy, which seems extraordinarily loose, and fiscal policy, which has consistently failed to hit PSBR targets, which together means that the UK has allowed its guard against inflationary policies to slip. The current circumstances, in no way parallel the Barber boom of the early 1970s nor the Lawson post-1987 expansion in the scale of extravagance. This is a much more subtle plot, because of the benign headline inflation.

Utilities danger

IF THERE is a danger in new Labour it is that it will water down its most credible proposals before and after the election.

A case in point is the party's proposals on regulating the privatised utilities set out in Margaret Beckett's industrial strategy document. The elements are a one-off windfall tax; measures to improve the transparency of the RPI-X system; to include profit-sharing between industry and consumers; "swingeing" financial penalties for companies which fail to deliver secure supplies; and plans to force companies to insure themselves against compensation claims.

Nobody needs to state the case for curbing the excesses of the utilities. The companies have, through a mixture of poor political judgement, incompetence and greed, made the case all by themselves.

Labour has milked the emotive debate around these excesses effectively. Now it has come forward with a credible package to deal with them. But it is important to realise that the package will only work if it is used in its entirety.

The windfall tax will have no lasting effect unless it is coupled to a more radical overhaul of the regulatory system. If a one-off tax is manageable for the companies, they will see "swingeing" penalties as footling. Remember, city experts believe that most utilities could withstand a £5 billion levy without changing their controversial dividend policies a jot.

So Labour's document is worrying in that it carries a hint that trade-offs are in the wind. Labour can expect the utilities — experienced in the art of brinkmanship — to fight its proposals all the way. Mrs Beckett should steel herself for a fight which is too important in the public interest to lose.

Cut-price flotation means big bonus for Thistle chief

David King

ROBERT Peel, chief executive of Thistle Hotels, is in line for a one-off cash bonus of £500,000 when the company comes to market, while senior operations director Norbert Peterson will pocket £250,000.

This emerged as Britain's second biggest hotels company yesterday confirmed the depressed state of the new issues market when it said it would be valued at just over £1 billion at its flotation next month — way below initial forecasts of £1.5 billion.

Under the package, which has raised eyebrows in the City, even among Thistle's advisers, Mr Peel will pick up 492,566 shares, which will be worth between £37,000 and £1.03 million depending on the pricing of the shares.

In addition, Mr Peel's contract entitles him to an

annual salary of £330,000 a year with a two-year notice period, while, under the terms of the company's performance share plan, he qualifies for substantial quantities of shares in the event of profit targets being achieved.

Mr Peel is already a millionaire several times over following Brierley's hostile £644 million takeover of Mount Charlotte Hotels, the group he formerly headed, in 1990.

It is understood that the pay packages being paid to Thistle's executives are one of the main reasons why City investors have given the issue such a lukewarm reception.

Although Thistle has signed up numerous City brokers to help with the flotation — a traditional way of stifling criticism — there have been rumours of discontent for some time behind the scenes.

Retail optimism soars as consumers splash out and Kingfisher swoops for £110m profit

Six more in store at Asda and jobs for 2,700

Roger Cowe

GROWING consumer confidence on the back of a strengthening housing market was reflected yesterday in surging profits from the B&Q, Comet and Woolworths group Kingfisher.

There was optimism too from other retailers and consumer products companies and Asda supermarkets chairman Patrick Gillam underlined this by revealing plans to open six superstores in the current six-month period, creating 2,700 new jobs.

The company also continued its campaign against price maintenance on medicines with the launch of cut-price, own-brand folic acid. At 45p for 30 tablets, Asda claimed it was about a third the price of the branded equivalent.

Supermarket optimism was shared by Budgens, whose chairman Clive Clague told shareholders at the annual meeting that sales were almost 5 per cent higher than last year.

But Kingfisher chairman Sir Geoffrey Mulcahy said he remained cautious about the solidity of the consumer boom as he looked towards the crucial Christmas season. "Consumers can be fickle. It's nothing like the 1990s happy-go-lucky style," he said.

Kingfisher bounced back from last year's troubles with 47 per cent profit growth, fuelled largely by the spin-off from the housing recovery. Profit before tax rose to £110 million, from sales of £2.5 billion.



Acid test... TV presenter Caron Keating (left) helps marketing director Gwyn Burr launch Asda's cut-price folic acid tablets. PHOTOGRAPH: JOHN HOULIHAN

mas season. "Consumers can be fickle. It's nothing like the 1990s happy-go-lucky style," he said.

Kingfisher bounced back from last year's troubles with 47 per cent profit growth, fuelled largely by the spin-off from the housing recovery. Profit before tax rose to £110 million, from sales of £2.5 billion.

Sir Geoffrey said: "The key has been improved consumer confidence."

The group's electrical chain, Comet, pushed up sales by almost 12 per cent as its low-price promotions and a personal computer boom added to renewed interest in electrical appliances. And the B&Q do-it-yourself operation saw

sales rise by more than 8 per cent as the DIY market returned to rapid growth after stagnation last year.

Sales also grew at Kingfisher's other UK interests, Woolworths and Superdrug. The less buoyant economy in France made life more difficult for the French electrical subsidiary, Darty, which never-

theless helped to maintain the group's recovery with 3 per cent extra sales.

Textile group Coats Viyella shares the optimism about shoppers returning to free-spending habits, despite reporting poor financial results. Half-year profits were down £24 million to £47 million, hit by tough conditions on the conti-

ment, in the Philippines and Malaysia.

In the UK, sales of knitwear and underwear were disappointing but Coats said: "Some pick-up became evident in the second quarter. Increasing consumer confidence and a return to more normal weather patterns should help second-half performance."

British Gas fishes for credit card customers

Richard Miles and Roger Cowe

PERHAPS it is because they have a three-second memory span that British Gas chose the goldfish as the brand for its new credit card launched yesterday.

It certainly was not the reason cited by British Gas's marketing team, though they surely hope consumers can be persuaded to forget the 75 per cent pay rise for ex-chief executive Cedric Brown and record levels of complaints.

Goldfish, they said, bring colour to a grey market and symbolise wealth and prosperity in the East. Wealth in this instance comes in the shape of lower gas bills. Every £100 spent with the Goldfish card, the first fruits of British Gas plans for divers-

sification, earns consumers a pound of their bill.

Mike Farsons, managing director of the new operation, a joint venture with American bank HFC, said the Goldfish card would save the average credit card holder — who puts £1,940 on plastic each year — more than £37 a year. "People can only collect so many glasses or earn points towards a balloon trip. This is the first credit card that brings real savings."

He said the utility was in talks with several companies to allow Goldfish customers to cut their bills for "essentials" like clothing and food. Many organisations are now jumping on the bandwagon. In recent weeks, new entrants to an already crowded market have included the Consumers' Association, champion of the buyer's rights, Lakeside

Shopping Centre in Thurrock, Essex, and American Airlines, who also intends to join the "plastic war".

Backed by a £10 million advertising campaign featuring Scottish comedian Billy Connolly, the Goldfish card is not the best deal on the market, even with the potential cuts in household bills. Available in both Visa or Mastercard flavours, it has a run-of-the-mill interest rate of 18.9 per cent APR. There is no annual fee and the interest-free credit period — how long before British Gas starts charging interest — is 52 days.

Within minutes of Goldfish's launch, the Co-operative Bank unveiled a card which it said was the cheapest on the market with a rock-bottom APR of 10.9 per cent. The Co-op Advantage Visa card has no annual fee and an introductory rate of 7.9 per cent until April next year.

Co-op managing director Terry Thomas said borrowers with an average £1,000 balance would save almost £100 a year compared with standard credit cards, adding to the competitive pressure.

Last week the Consumers' Association was accused of dirty tricks when its magazine Which? published a glowing review of its two new cards. British Gas, which felt no qualms about defending Mr Brown's 75 per cent rise, would surely not stoop to such low behaviour? Nor to launch a gold card version known as a Cedric.

Deutsche chips in again

Richard Miles

DEUTSCHE BANK intervened again yesterday to reassure the 60,000 remaining investors in the three stricken Morgan Grenfell funds run by rogue fund manager Peter Young, pledging to buy up the funds' shares if the outflow of money persists over the next three months.

Nervous investors continued to withdraw their money from the MG European funds, which are under investigation by City watchdogs after their 72-hour suspension last week, almost exhausting the £300 million

cash in the trusts. Deutsche Bank has already pumped in £180 million.

The investment bank said it would no longer disclose the redemption rates, but it is understood they have fallen below Tuesday's level, when some £24 million was removed, taking the total withdrawals beyond £250 million since dealings in the trusts resumed last Thursday.

Yesterday's move aims to deter a further run on the funds, though it came too late for many financial intermediaries, who have advised private investors to leave the Morgan Grenfell funds.

A deluge of onward transfers by Personal Equity Plan

holders is expected later this week.

One financial adviser said: "This is nice, but I don't think it will have any effect. It is just a bit of public relations." Another said: "Deutsche Bank should have said it would buy up the units last week. We removed a six-figure sum from the funds on Monday."

The fallout from the debacle continued to spread, as Sedgwick Noble Lowndes, a leading firm of consulting actuaries, blackballed Morgan Grenfell for new pension clients, while Imro, the investment watchdog, and the bank pursue their investigations into the funds' irregularities.

De Benedetti holdings face Bourse inquiry

John Glover in Milan

THE turbulence surrounding Olivetti and Carlo De Benedetti, its former chairman, spread yesterday to France where the Bourse watchdog, COB, opened an inquiry following press accounts of a planned deal involving his French holding company and another French group.

The watchdog said it had started the inquiry on reports that the French group CGIP would take over Cerus, the De Benedetti investment vehicle, and Valeo, a car-parts maker that Cerus controls.

Cerus group denied that this meant the company was unable to sell them. "Making a loan with shares as pledged collateral is the

most normal form of financing there is," he said. "When you sell the asset you pay the bank the loan."

Valeo is controlled by CIR through Cerus, which owns 28 per cent of the shares and 42 per cent of the votes. Valeo reported net profits of 656 million francs (£83 million) for the first half of this year and has attracted the interest of several international buyers. Cerus and Valeo are listed on the Paris exchange.

A CIR source ruled out the De Benedetti group as the origin of the leaks.

"We have acted in scrupulous respect of the rules," the source said. He confirmed that there were "conversations" were taking place between the Italians and CGIP.

How the charges compare

	APR	Annual fee	Interest-free credit period
Co-op Bank Advantage Visa	10.9%	nil	nil
Consumers' Association Classic Visa Card	18.9%	nil	56 days
British Gas Goldfish Mastercard	18.9%	nil	52 days
Lakeside Visa Card	20.2%	nil	56 days
Lloyds Bank Access Card	20.5%	£12	56 days

TOURIST RATES — BANK SELLS

Australia 1.8660	France 7.75	Italy 2.320	Singapore 2.14
Austria 16.017	Germany 2.2775	Malta 0.5420	South Africa 0.70
Belgium 46.85	Greece 365.50	Netherlands 2.5550	Spain 192.00
Canada 2.08	Hong Kong 11.72	New Zealand 2.17	Sweden 10.32
Cyprus 0.70	India 55.66	Norway 9.83	Switzerland 1.85
Denmark 6.82	Ireland 0.3375	Portugal 234.40	Turkey 132.387
Finland 7.0480	Israel 4.92	Saudi Arabia 5.80	USA 1.5200

Supplied by NatWest Bank (excluding Indian rupee and Israeli sheqal)



Barry Paterson takes a bath outside the Treasury as the Coalition on Charging delivers a letter to the Chancellor demanding proper funding of community care. PHOTOGRAPH BY SEAN SMITH

Alcopops take the fizz out of cider industry

OUTLOOK/ Lisa Buckingham on the challenges that face the 'rite of passage' drink of the eighties

WHEN shareholders in H P Bulmer turn up for their annual meeting at the Cider Mills in Hereford's Plough Lane this morning any litters will have little to do with how long they have to wait for a courtesy bottle of Strongbow or Scrumpy Jack.

Instead, most will be on tenterhooks lest their chairman, Esmond Bulmer, tells a tale of woe similar to that unleashed earlier this week by rival cider-maker, Matthew Clark, whose shares nosedived again yesterday.

But drinks industry sources suggest Bulmer investors have rather less to fear from the "alcopop" craze than shareholders in Matthew Clark, whose recent sales of cider and babyclash have been smashed by competition from the likes of Hooper's Hooch, Two Dogs and Shot's.

Clearly, having shaken off its erstwhile dowdy image and taken competition from cheap supermarket brands by the throat, cider is once again facing a fierce assault on its £1 billion patch from the new breed of drinks that are effectively a mechanism for getting alcohol into the blood stream without having to upset unsophisticated taste buds with all those nasty warm beers, strong smelling whistles and altogether too challenging Chardonnays.

It is estimated that since the launch of Hooper's Hooch just a year ago, there are now about 90 brands in the alcopop market and sales are running at the equivalent of £200 million a year. But drinks industry executives suggest there is more to the problems facing Matthew Clark than meets the eye and possibly greater room for optimism for the cider industry's long-term potential and the outlook for its largest participant, H P Bulmer.

First, it is plain that, in its drive to improve profits, Matthew Clark, which now owns Taunton and Geymer, has cut the amount of money it puts into advertising its top brands such as Diamond White and E. The company has little faith in advertising despite studies that suggest consumers are hard-pressed to tell the difference in taste between cider brands and so have to have their purchases

Good times for News Bunny

Lisa Buckingham

MIRROR Group Newspapers, which yesterday reported a small rise in half-time profits to £39 million despite sharply higher newspaper costs, said it would consider more local newspaper acquisitions even though it lost out in a bid for Pearson's Westminster Press.

The company denied any intention of closing its loss-making cable business Live TV, which has such unprofitable items as the News Bunny and topless darts; nor would it be tempted to sell one of its national newspapers to step up its involvement in terrestrial television.

Chief executive David Montgomery stressed that newspaper opportunities would not dilute the group's television ambitions. But MGN's share of newspaper readership means it cannot expand its TV ownership beyond the 30 per cent stake in Scottish TV without falling foul of broadcast regulations.

The company, which produces the Mirror, Sunday Mirror and People plus the Daily Record in Scotland, said yesterday reported a 28 per cent interim profit rise to £26 million — remained committed to the independent and independent on Sunday.

These titles reported a loss of £7 million in the first six months of the financial year, but cross-charges within MGN means much of this is eliminated at the group level.

Group executives said the independent had not felt much impact from the latest News International promotion, selling The Times for 10p on Mondays.

Mr Montgomery said MGN had managed to improve profits and margins despite an extra £18 million newspaper bill by raising the cover price of the Daily Mirror by 2p to 30p and by selling more advertising. Sales were more than 29 per cent up at £277.3 million, with circulation revenues up by 7.4 per cent and advertising income 4.8 per cent higher.

Cash-rich Reuters unveils its plans to return a further £613m to shareholders

REUTERS, the financial news and information group, yesterday unveiled plans to hand back to shareholders, in the form of special shares, £613 million of its £970 million cash pile, writes Lisa Buckingham.

The move, which follows similar shareholder hand-outs from companies such as Barclays and Boots, means Reuters will have returned to investors during the 1990s nearly £1 billion of surplus cash. Executives pointed out,

however, that this would not be done at the expense of investment, which has topped £1.8 billion over the past three and a half years. Spending on new products, such as the recently launched 3000 series, is crucial to Reuters, which is under intense competition from such rivals as the US information group, Bloomberg.

Reuters indicated earlier this year that it was studying plans to hand money back to investors because a

repeat of the 1993 share repurchase was not possible since UK tax clearance was not available.

Comprehensive UK tax clearance has not so far been secured for the latest scheme, which involves the issue of special dividend shares, but Reuters' management said the proposal should avoid any tax disadvantage for existing shareholders. Shares in the company rose 14p to 764p in a falling market.

Shareholders will receive one special dividend share and 18 new ordinary shares for every 20 shares they already own. Each special dividend share will pay net dividends totalling 750p over a three-year period,

compared with the recent share price of 752p. The manoeuvre will reduce the amount of cash available by 5 per cent, but is not expected to alter earnings per share.

Analysts said the amount being handed back was larger than the £500 million expected, but this was partially offset by spreading the payments over three years.

Reuters said it considered the scheme "the best way of enabling shareholders to receive more cash, more efficiently, at a faster rate and on an equal basis".

Shareholders will have to approve the scheme, which will pay the first special dividend on November 25.

The better than expected half-time figures — which helped shares rise 64p to 207p — have prompted analysts to raise their forecasts for the full year when profits of about £30 million are expected as the impact of newspaper prices begins to diminish.

News in brief

Chiltern ends train order drought

Three years of train-building drought in Britain ended yesterday when Chiltern Railways ordered new rolling stock for its London-Birmingham route.

Chiltern is paying £34 million for twelve 100mph trains to ABB Daimler-Benz Transportation of Derby — the first UK rail order for 1,064 days and the first by a privatised passenger operator. To secure its franchise, Chiltern had to promise to introduce new trains, which are expected to be in place by 1998.

The deal has been financed by Porterbrook Leasing, one of three private companies which purchased British Rail's old rolling stock. — *Letha Harper*

Classic sues for £3m

Classic FM, the national classical music radio station, launched legal action claiming £3 million damages relating to the charges it pays to transmit programmes. The writ was issued against NTL, a subsidiary of US Cabletel, which secured the transmission deal with the BBC on behalf of Classic in 1992.

Classic pays 50 per cent of maintenance costs for masts used by BBC Radios 1, 2 and 4 and reckons it should share these costs pro-rata. The company says NTL accepted the charging system was unfair and pledged to try to renegotiate. Failure to do so, Classic alleges, will mean extra payments of £3 million during its eight-year licence. — *Lisa Buckingham*

Art sales grow

CHRISTIE'S International, the art auctioneer and dealer, reported strong sales growth in Britain, Hong Kong and Switzerland as pre-tax profits jumped from £10.1 million to £15.9 million during the first six months of 1996. — *Jon King*

Co-op up a quarter

ATTENTION to price, service and its ethical stance assisted Co-operative Bank to a jump in pre-tax profits of almost a quarter, to £25 million, for the first half year. After launching aggressively priced products, average customer deposits grew by 28 per cent, pushing up net interest income by a fifth while lending was up by 16 per cent. — *Roger Coote*

vita

HIGHLIGHTS
FROM THE INTERIM RESULTS TO 30 JUNE 1996

Turnover	£477m
Profit before tax	£26m
Earnings per share	7.7p
Dividend per share	4.0p

- Good recovery from 2nd Half 1995
- Concentration on operational margins
- Strong Cash Flow at business level

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Copy of the interim report can be obtained by the Company Secretary

Magnate denies plotting \$1.2bn fraud that led to BCCI collapse

Jonathan Corino

THE head of an international shipping and trading empire plotted a \$1.2 billion (£776 million) fraud that led to the collapse of scandal-ridden bank BCCI and financial disaster for its depositors, the Old Bailey heard yesterday.

Abbas Gokal operated the swindle to fund his lavish lifestyle and provide personal gain for himself and his immediate family, said Anthony Hacking QC, prosecuting.

Mr Gokal, along with his two brothers and some dishonest bank officials at BCCI, set up a "factory" in the bank's London headquarters that created false documents on a vast scale, the court heard.

They later set up and ran a

false financial structure "which was used as a screen to deceive the outside world as to what was really going on between him and BCCI".

Mr Gokal, aged 60, has denied conspiracy to defraud and to account falsely between 1985 and 1991 — the year BCCI collapsed.

Mr Hacking said Mr Gokal ran a shipping and trading empire from Geneva and London called the Gulf Group.

Mr Hacking said: "You will hear of vast sums of money — literally millions of dollars — flowing between his companies all round the world."

Bank accounts were set up in New York and were used to collect and distribute funds secretly through a large number of companies. The Gulf Group's finances deteriorated and Mr Gokal threatened in 1995 to liquidate his empire.

By this time BCCI could not withdraw without risking collapse, said Mr Hacking.

More than \$500 million was stolen by some senior officials of BCCI from private funds of the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi over whose funds BCCI had control in order to satisfy Gulf Group's demands.

Bribes were paid to three of the BCCI officers involved in the fraud, the prosecution alleged.

While Mr Gokal claimed Gulf Group never existed, documents signed by him were found by the Serious Fraud Office, in a London safe deposit box, which showed that he and his two brothers owned and controlled the companies involved in the frauds, said Mr Hacking.

"They show that he and his two brothers incurred \$1.2 billion of debt owed to

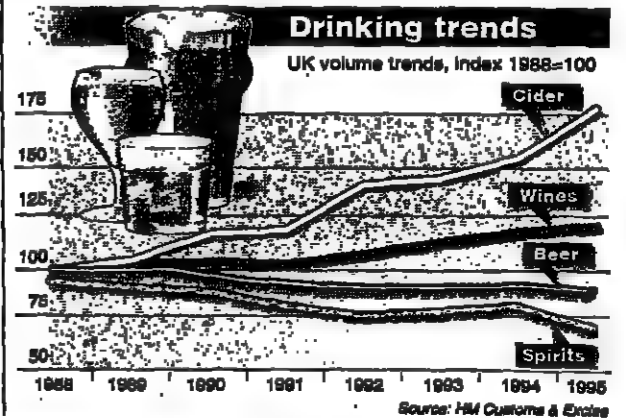
BCCI, where there was no real security. This was a major factor leading to the collapse of BCCI."

BCCI had 24 branches in Britain. It was closed down by the Bank of England which had received a report the previous month from accountants Price Waterhouse "which extensively chronicled for the first time the frauds and deceptions involved".

After the collapse, most of the conspirators went to Pakistan, where there was no extradition treaty with Britain, the court heard.

Mr Gokal also went, but in December 1994 caught a plane travelling from Pakistan to the US which put down in Frankfurt to refuel. Mr Gokal was arrested and extradited to Britain.

The hearing is expected to last six months.



Underside

Richard Thomas

LORD Sterling, imperious boss of the shipping and property group P&O, has offered the Prime Minister a pearl of his wisdom. On the eve of announcing the merger of P&O with Dutch firm Nedlloyd, the "close friend" of Mrs Thatcher "dropped a note" into Number 10 warning that, unless the Government gets its act together, the maritime industry will decamp to more favourable territory.

Here, at last, is a possible role for Mr Major's secret weapon, codenamed NORMA. She shares with Sterling years of opera and could soothe his angst between arias. They could start with HMS Pinafore.

PHILLIP Oppenheim, new Treasury minister and party animal, lost some valuable revealing time on a recent TV mer evening. Promoted a slot on the national television evening news as duty Treasury minister, the eager MP was dispatched from his country home to the nearest studio in Gloucester.

Ten minutes into the hour-plus drive the producer changed his mind but, as Mr Oppenheim has

no car phone, it was impossible to stop him. He arrived to be met by a solitary doorman, who curtly informed him that he was "not required". According to insiders, the minister was not pleased.

KICKING off a discussion on the Tobin Tax — a levy on foreign exchange transactions first proposed by James Tobin in 1972 — Stephen Griffiths, Jones of Sussex University, began to explain why the National Liberal Club was such a suitable venue.

But before she could warm to her theme, presumably on the rawness of Liberal bods like Keynes and Beveridge, participant Andrew Hilton cut her off: "Why, because it is the home of dead ideas?" Harsh, but fair.

HE'S COME 3,000 MILES TO WATCH SEVER NOT SCORE

Newspaper illustration showing a man sitting at a desk with a television set. The TV screen shows a scene from the River Sever. A speech bubble above the man says: 'HE'S COME 3,000 MILES TO WATCH SEVER NOT SCORE'. Below the TV, it says 'Newspaper illustration'.

EUROPEAN monetary union is not standard fare at Washington dinner tables. But for those residents who work for the World Bank and International Monetary Fund the issue could soon be of burning personal significance.

Under the 1944 Articles of Association, the headquarters of both bodies should be located within the boundaries of the member with the largest shareholding. The penny is starting to drop that, post-EMU, that place could be the euro-area, in which case the Frankfurt property market could be well worth a punt...

APOSTING to New York for Ian Shepherson of HSBC Markets is proving a wrench. Poor Mr Shepherson has just bought a season ticket for Newcastle United (not cheap) and he has agreed to cross the Atlantic only on condition that his new home in Summit, New Jersey, is fitted with a fit-wide television screen on which to watch his beloved team.

INDIA'S parliament was plunged into darkness for a few minutes on Wednesday, interrupting a debate of MPs. Apparently a power failure was to blame. The subject under discussion at the time? Advances in Indian science and technology.

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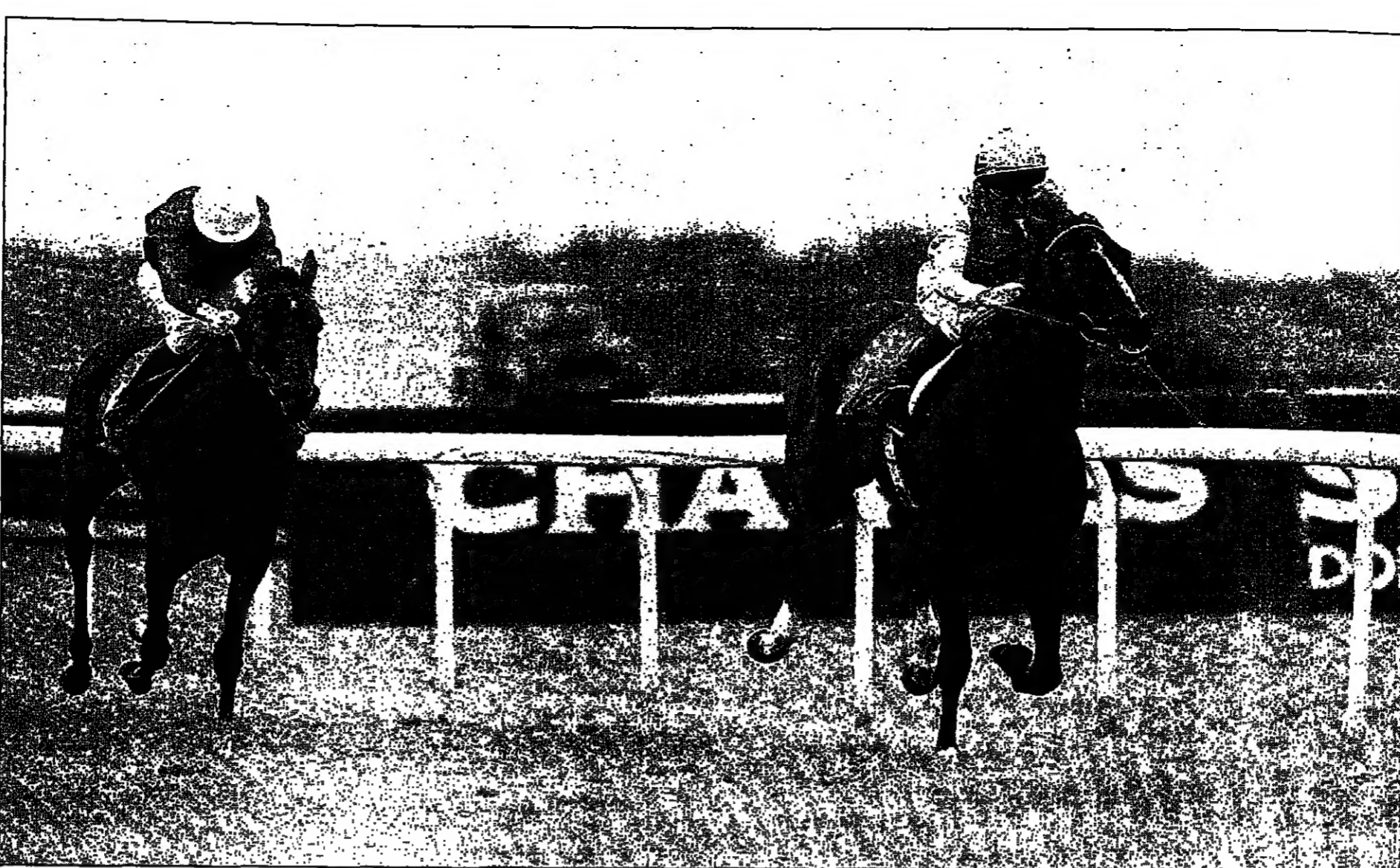
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Racing

Cecil takes the initiative in race for trainers' title with a double on the opening day of the Doncaster St Leger meeting. Chris Hawkins reports

Eva Luna repays Eddery with interest

TRANSATLANTIC telephone lines must have been buzzing yesterday as Cecil, in Kentucky for the yearling sales, learned of the Doncaster success that took him to the top of the trainers' table. Corradini and Eva Luna did the business for him as his big rival Saad bin Surour slipped back into second place after the abject failure of Russian Snows in the Park Hill Stakes.



Time out... Eva Luna, Pat Eddery's 150th winner of the season, gallops on too strongly for Time Allowed in the Park Hill Stakes at Doncaster yesterday

David Barron fuelled his reputation as the being one of the best trainers of sprint handicappers in the country when winning "both" races for the Tote-Portland Handicap.

Both are in next week's Ladbrokes Ayr Gold Cup in which Barron also has the ante-post favourite Coastal Bluff, although his participation is not quite so certain now that he may have to shoulder top weight of 9st 10lb.

"If he gets top weight that alters the job and we'll have to see," said Barron. "But Musical Season will definitely run - his owner Peter Savill has always wanted to win the race - and for the Present is pretty certain to go as well."

Musical Season incurred a 7lb penalty, taking his weight to 8st 7lb, and is 12-1 from 33's with the sponsors. The reason for the overall rise in the weights for the race is that Anzio, currently heading the handicap, is unlikely to run following his thrilling final stride in yesterday's Doncaster Bloodstock Sales Scarborough Stakes.

Gay Kelleway picked up Anzio for \$6,000 of a claimant at Langfield in February. The gelding has since won over \$40,000 for his shrewd handler who is not short on self-confidence. She reckons she could "train winners on the moon" and as this was her 34th of the season it is hard to argue with her.

A measure of her judgment will be the performance of her two-year-old Musher in tomorrow's Laurent-perrier Champagne Stakes. "He's so good he frightens me," she said. "I worked him with Russian Music, who is rated 103, and the three-year-old couldn't get anywhere near him."

Celeric to stay ahead in Cup

DOUBLE Trigger, last season's champion stayer who lost his crown in the Ascot Gold Cup two races in, nearly three months on the sidelines in this afternoon's East Coast Doncaster Cup, writes Chris Hawkins.

A foot injury which scuffed his sale to Saudi Arabia has been the reason for his absence but Mark Johnston, his trainer, is happy enough with him now.

"He's been back in training for five weeks and has had a steady run on for three weeks," said Johnston. "I don't think he's quite 100 per cent fit, but he's well enough to do himself justice."

Double Trigger has always been characterized by his determination and no doubt will take some beating today, but he must be vulnerable after such a lengthy lay-off.

Celeric looks the big danger. Blessed with a fine turn of foot, he will be waiting to pounce in the final furlong and if his stamina holds out he may prevail.

I hate opposing Double Trigger but just prefer Celeric (3-40) on this occasion. The Fly (2-00) has won his last two races in remarkable style and could defy the handicapper by registering a hat-trick in the Ralph Raper Nursery.

Barry Hills trains this two-year-old who, as befits a relation of that grand stayer Further Flight, showed his appreciation of a test of stamina when storming through the final furlong to win a 20-runner nursery over a mile at Newcastle last time.

He had previously arrived late on the scene when getting up on the final stride at Ayr, and that form has worked out well.

David Loder has been enjoying a purple patch and Bin Rosie (2-35) looks another winner for him in the Group 3 Britain's Fastest Railway Park Stakes.

Chepstow runners and riders

Table listing race details for Chepstow, including race numbers, names, and times.

Doncaster with guide to the latest form

Table listing race details for Doncaster, including race numbers, names, and times.

Channel 4

Table listing race details for Channel 4, including race numbers, names, and times.

Results

Table listing race results, including race numbers, names, and winners.

Newton Abbot (N.H.) programme

Table listing race details for Newton Abbot, including race numbers, names, and times.

Channel 4

Table listing race details for Channel 4, including race numbers, names, and times.

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Amsterdamm advertisement with large stylized text and a vertical banner.

RACELINE advertisement with contact information and a logo.

Soccer

Champions League, Group A: Grasshopper Zurich 3, Rangers 0

Swiss goal blizzard buries Rangers

Patrick Glenn in Zurich

SCOTLAND'S stock in Europe dipped again when Kublyay Turkyilmaz led Grasshopper to a victory in Zurich which was not only comprehensive but thoroughly merited.

Walter Smith's apparently reasonable hope that Rangers would be more positive than they had been in last season's opening match in Bucharest was shattered within the first 10 minutes.

Grasshopper, pushed from the middle by the powerful and skilful Yakin, Maguin and Esposito and spear-headed by the clever, lightning-quick pairing of Turkyilmaz and Moldovan, came off their stools like hungry contenders in a world championship fight.

Even before those early goals, they had hit the crossbar, forced a wonderful save from Goram and generally made the travelling support, huddled in a corner of the stadium, feel as though they had strayed into an ambush.

A goal for the home side seemed inevitable long before Yakin scored the opener in the 18th minute. Moldovan's searing shot had made Goram launch into a full-length dive to his right and Turkyilmaz had clipped the crossbar with a bewildering turn past Gough from Yakin.

Then Turkyilmaz was fouled by Bjorklund only a foot from the by-line on Rangers' left and took the free kick himself. The ball was played straight to Yakin, who headed it downwards and over the line via Goram's right-hand post.

The Swiss had already declared impressive credentials at that point, yet this was an unusual goal for Rangers to concede. They are normally expert at defending high crosses into their area.

Allowing Yakin the free header was an ominous indi-

cator of their lack of self-assurance, and they were in complete disarray when the second goal was scored in 26 minutes. Later, Petric fouled Turkyilmaz, and this time the elegant striker put a wicked curve on the ball with a left-foot drive that flew deep into Goram's left-hand corner from 20 yards.

By that stage Rangers had managed only one worthwhile attack. Laudrup, Gascoigne and Durie combining to set up Albertz, coming in from the left. But the defender's low drive was pushed wide by the diving Zuberbuhler, and when Gascoigne received treatment by the touchline for a knock on his right ankle it was just another in a series of bad moments for the Scottish champions.

Rangers markedly improved their territorial gains after the break, if only because Grasshopper adopted a what-we-have-we-bold policy. They began to rely on the long through-ball to the feet and wits of Turkyilmaz and Moldovan, and even this cautious tactic almost brought the third goal.

Turkyilmaz found himself suddenly free on the right, with his partner waiting six yards from goal. The ball was delivered but Moldovan drove it into the ground and over the bar. Turkyilmaz, claiming a corner, was booked for carrying the ball away.

McCall joined him in Senor Garcia's book soon afterwards for a lunge at Esposito, but Rangers won freedom then almost brought a reward. Albertz, fed by McCall 30 yards from goal, produced a fierce left-foot drive and the ball carried only marginally wide.

Laudrup, who had mainly been a huge disappointment, had a sound claim for a penalty when he motored into the area from the right and was body-checked by Yakin, but the appeals went unheeded.

The replacement of Cleland by McInnes soon after this was an indication of Rangers' urgent need of more freedom forward areas, but by then the Swiss were very much in control.

Grasshopper: Zuberbuhler, Gampfer, Thun, G. Orlandi, Esposito, Moldovan, Turkyilmaz, Vogel, Maguin, Haas. Rangers: Goram, Cleland, Gough, Petric, Bjorklund, Albertz, Gascoigne, McCall, Laudrup, McCall, Durie. Referee: J.M. Garcia Aranda (Spain).



Float like a Grasshopper, sting like a bee... Yakin flies between two Rangers defenders to head the opening goal in Zurich. PHOTOGRAPH: ERIC LAFARGUE

Jardel doubly blessed as merciless Porto twice fight back to triumph at Milan

THE EUROPEAN Cup opened with a convulsion in Italy but not, sadly for England, in Turin. Instead Milan, clear favourites for the trophy, fell 3-2 at the San Siro to the Porto side led to the Portuguese title last season by their former coach Bobby Robson.

The Italian champions were twice ahead, only for Jardel to strike twice, after 75 and 83 minutes, to give Porto a memorable win. Ajax, Juventus' victims in the final in May, won 1-0 in France against Auxerre, Litmanen striking with a volley after only four minutes.

In the Uefa Cup, Moscow Spartak survived mounting second-half worries before emerging with a 3-2 win over Silkeborg of Denmark. The Russians swept into a 3-0 lead in 37 minutes through from Tikhonov, who struck twice, and Kachinov. But after the interval Silkeborg fought back

with goals from Thygesen and Reese. Then, in the closing minutes, Spartak's goalkeeper Nigmatullin was sent off for handling outside the area. Tikhonov took the jersey and saved a penalty. In Poland, Monaco beat Huznik Krakow 1-0, scoring a late goal despite play-

ing with only 10 men for most of the second half. Monaco's defender Philippe Leonard was sent off in the 62nd minute after a wild tackle brought his second yellow card. But his Nigerian team-mate Viktor Ikpeba scored from close range three minutes from the end.

First Division: Norwich 1, QPR 1

Impey tweaks Canaries' tail

Trevor Haylett

IT WAS AS IF the new QPR manager had been appointed during the half-time interval and immediately woke them up to the nature of the task.

After an opening period in which they were clearly second best, Rangers revived spectacularly to earn a point through Andrew Impey's 61st-minute equaliser.

Robert Fleck was missing last night and the introduction of the young striker Ade Akinbiyi persuaded Norwich to adopt a long-passing tactic to try and capitalise on his pace.

Crook's distributive skills were crucial as they launched a wave of attacks, one diagonal delivery in the 13th minute almost prising an opening for Neil Adams. On that occasion the winger over-ran the ball but when the next combined the result was both fruitful and memorable.

Norwich had just seen Darren Eadie go lying in the penalty area when Alan McDonald fouled on Shaun Carey earned the captain a booking and, immediately, Crook's severe punishment.

Crook's clever 17th-minute free-kick saw him pass through the legs of a team-mate and into Adams's stride for a splendidly struck drive, his fifth goal of the season.

Simon Barker almost surprised Bryan Gunn with a volley but it was an isolated QPR raid.

Most of the action was at the other end and after one thrilling run Akinbiyi lifted the ball over Steve Yates but his wayward finish illustrated his inexperience.

QPR are clearly missing the influence of Ray Wilkins on the field, not to mention the former manager's passing ability. Without his clever prompting Trevor Sinclair and Daniele DiCicco were forced to manufacture their own openings.

From DiCicco's cross early in the second half Mike Milligan was forced into a desperate clearance to keep Norwich's lead intact. It was now becoming a far more even affair, with Matt Jackson testing Gunn from a corner, although Norwich remained dangerous on the break.

An equaliser looked more and more likely as QPR grew in confidence and with his first touch the substitute Paul Murray scraped the top of the crossbar. A foul on Sinclair by the right touch-line earned Danny Mills his second booking and a red card and when the free-kick was only partly cleared Impey rammed the rebound home.

Norwich: Gurn, Smith, Newman, Polson, Mills, Crook, Milligan, Carey, Adams, Akinbiyi, Eadie. QPR: Sommer, Jackson, Yates, McDonald, Brown, Charlie Morris, Barker, Ousmane, Impey, Sinclair, DiCicco, Referee: M Bailey (Hempstead).

Charlton warn QPR off Curbishley

CHARLTON yesterday warned Queens Park Rangers that it would cost them a fortune to recruit Alan Curbishley as their new manager.

Rangers had hoped to announce a replacement for Ray Wilkins this week and after their failure to land Terry Venables, George Graham or Ray Harford, the spotlight has fallen on Curbishley.

But Charlton's executive director Jonathan Fuller said there had been no approach for their manager "and we would not welcome one. If he went, we would demand considerable compensation. We would not stand in his way if he made it clear he wanted to go but hopefully he won't".

The Croatian international defender Slaven Bilic is thinking over West Ham's offer of a new contract. "It is too early to say what the conclusion will be," he said yesterday. "I think and hope I will stay here as I have a superb relationship with the players, the manager and the fans. But you never know".

Manchester City have signed the centre-back Darren Wardell on a month's loan from Derby to ease the injury crisis that has robbed the caretaker manager Asa Hartford of five senior defenders.

Southampton's Dutch central defender Ken Jonkox is set to play for the first time this season on Saturday against Tottenham after a prolonged cast muscle injury.

The Anglo-Italian Cup has been scrapped this season because the English and Italian leagues cannot agree dates.

Evans seeks away bonus

Ian Ross on Liverpool's arrival in Anjal

Ankoski and an attempt to relieve the pressure in the Cup Winners' Cup tonight

IN A town none of Liverpool's squad had heard of before last month's draw Britain's most successful footballing export will tonight step back onto the Cup Winners' Cup trail.

They will do so with confidence notwithstanding the fact that it is a trophy that has never found its way to the Liverpool trophy cabinet — although they lost the 1986 final to Borussia Dortmund — a gap in the club's curriculum vitae made all the more irritating by Everton's success in the competition 11 years ago.

Beneath grey skies Liverpool's arrival in this sleepy, run-of-the-paper-mill Finnish town went all but unnoticed. It is hardly surprising, by Premier's standards, the Mersersiders' opponents are second-class.

Naturally the manager Roy Evans was at pains to remind everybody that MyPa-47 dumped Motherwell out of the Uefa Cup on away goals last season and that Liverpool's last visit to Finland five years ago had ended in a 1-0 second-leg defeat by Kuusysi Lahti.

I would like to believe that not stop Evans from naming a brave starting line-up in the hope of plundering a precious away goal. "These days scoring on your opponents' ground is so vital."

Curiously, although his side is one of only three in the Premiership to have navigated the season's opening five games without defeat, Evans is feeling the pressure. Earlier this week he took the unusual step of barring the Liverpool Echo's reporter

from the club's training ground. The reason? The Saturday pink edition had the temerity to print two letters criticising Evans's perceived tactical naivety. The two parties have since kissed and made up.

Although Jamie Redknapp is almost ready to launch a senior comeback after picking up an injury for England against Scotland in Euro 96, Evans seems likely to stick with the men who did little to impress in defeating Southampton 2-1 on Saturday.

"We haven't been fantastic so far; we have been grinding out results," conceded Evans. Before a crowd of 4,000 in the tiny Savonlinna Stadium, MyPa-47 would settle for that.

"Liverpool are so well-known in Finland they will probably have more supporters here than we do," said the MyPa coach Harri Kampman. The Uefa mandarins must have seriously considered renaming the tournament the Cup Losers' Cup this year.

Thirteen entrants — including Liverpool — qualified by finishing as runners-up in their respective knock-out competition.

Kalac 'deal' costs Wolves £250,000

Peter White

WOLVES have been ordered by a Football League commission to pay Leicester City £250,000 in compensation after their manager Mark McGhee reneged on a transfer deal with his former club.

The commission ruled yesterday that McGhee was wrong to withdraw from negotiations with Leicester after initially agreeing to sign the Australian goalkeeper Zejko Kalac for £50,000.

Soon after leaving Filbert Street for Molineux McGhee inquired about the midfielder Steve Corica, also an Australian, and Kalac and Leicester accepted a £175m package. McGhee, however, handed over only £1.1m for Corica after learning that he might have work-problem problems over the 6ft 7in Kalac, still registered with Leicester and on loan to Sydney United.

Wolves must also pay a further £200,000 for Corica now that he has made 25 appearances for them.

Whitaker

Paul Weaver

THE HINDS... though the... are competing... can't enter... round... be divided... in the absence... leading team... always likely... pieces, England... figure.

There is no knowing what the situation will be for the second leg on September 25 but it will not see the task of winning by two goals to go through. If Arsenal can hit any hope, it is from the fact that the poor state of Borussia's ground means the tie will be played at Cologne, where the Germans have not won for four years.

Adams is likely to be a still, despite having resumed training after the knee operation that has kept him out since January. Berghamp, too, is very doubtful.

The one piece of encouraging news for Arsenal fans is that Wenger is keen to secure and compromise the job of manager of Borussia's attacking movements characterised by the difference between the twists on the night.

Carlos Queiroz, the coach of the US Major League club New York-New Jersey, confirmed yesterday that he was offering the job of manager of the Japanese club Grampus Eight, which could speed Wenger's departure.

Rugby League

South Wales 'relegated' before they start

Paul Fitzpatrick

SOUTH WALES will play in the First Division next season rather than in Super League, to which they had provisionally been admitted.

The club's "fast tracking" into Super League was dependent on their meeting stipulations over finance and playing strength. But Maurice Lindsay, the game's chief executive, felt that, while the state of the club was "pretty good", there was a "little bit missing" on each of the requirements.

The blow of losing a Super

League place has been softened by a financial sweetener. South Wales have been guaranteed £250,000, and their income from their first season could be £1 million if they win the title.

South Wales's demotion means that the Super League will remain at 12 clubs with the same number in the First Division and 10 in the Second.

The Super League clubs will get a bigger share of the cake next season — £11.4 million — but all the clubs came away from yesterday's meeting in Leeds satisfied with their allocation: £4.7 million to the First Division clubs

and £1.1 million to the Second. Apollo Perinot, the St Helens and Western Samoa prop, was yesterday named the inaugural Player of the Year by the Rugby League Writers' Association.

St Helens, meanwhile, have confirmed their interest in Iestyn Harris, the Warrington full-back or stand-off, who is on offer at £1.35 million.

Harris, who is also a target for Sheffield Eagles, said he "would jump at the chance" to join Saints. "They are a top side and I hope they and Warrington can sort out a deal," Harris added.

Results

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Cricket

Thoroughbred Jones is clear Derby winner

HERE were more lurking... than at one of Princess Diana's self-orchestrated photocalls.



Quiet one... coach Stillman

Their intended prey was of course Dominic Cork, whose marriage was in trouble. He looked pale and tired, though he turned in some of his best bowling for weeks.

But "Deano" is also the quintessentially tough, un-sentimental Aussie who knows that cricketing fame comes at a price.

It was more a general observation than a dig at Cork, a player whose feisty, if over-histrionic, attitude usually finds favour with his skipper.

Today Derbyshire, six points off the top, face Warwickshire at Derby. And, with an irony that is not lost on Jones, their final fixture — which could bring them their first championship in 60 years — is against Durham, the fledgling first-class county he was on the point of relinquishing during the summer.

There are few, even angry, expressions peeping up from the basement. Many of the Durham committee were convinced he had indirectly helped to set up in the first year of promoted status. But Derbyshire are an altogether more attractive proposition in terms of immediate ambition and no doubt cash in-

David Foot on the Victorian couple giving Derbyshire visions of their first title since 1936

documents to the newcomer. "I was treated beautifully at Durham and have no complaints with them at all," said Jones.

Not for years has the championship developed into such an enthralling, open contest. If Derbyshire should squeak back to the top, it will serve as a glowing vindication of their resourceful chairman Mike Horton, who has radically refashioned the county and turned round its parlous finances to make it the circuit's most improved set-up, on and off the field.

So, at the age of 35, Jones has now focused his energies as a player and hard-eyed tactician, into a burning commitment to Derbyshire. "Some of the committee were a bit wary of us when we came over. They were worried about what they feared would be a different format and an Australian approach."

TOP SIX

Table with 4 columns: County, Points, Wickets, Runs. Lists top six counties: Lancashire, Warwickshire, Yorkshire, Derbyshire, Durham, Gloucestershire.

of strong personalities, so you just have to be strong as well, treating the players as you'd want to be treated. Les came over two weeks before me and laid down the rules. He looks after the tactical aspects and comes up with ideas all the time.

"Devon Malcolm is no problem at all: he's a wonderful mate. I let him set his own fields when he's bowling and he likes that responsibility."

As for Kim Barnett, the previous captain: "I couldn't ask for a better man in the trenches. He's always coming up with good tips, based on his knowledge of the English game, and I listen to them."

Barnett, for his part, says the Jones-Stillman partnership is working productively. "If Deano asks me something, then I chip in but mostly I stay in the background. Les is a quiet unassuming Australian who is particularly effective on preparation. But it's the captain who decides on policy and determines the tactics. It wasn't difficult for me to give up the captaincy — to be honest, I was sick of it."

Jones admits he is weary and echoes the valid cry that there is too much cricket in an English season. "Captaincy is very hard mentally, though I wouldn't change a thing. It helps that my wife and family are over with me."

Warwickshire's reserve wicketkeeper Michael Burns is expected to play as a batsman, with knee surgery ending Dominic Odeker's season. The medium-pace Graeme Welch has been added to the visitors' squad.



Lord one... captain Deano makes his point at slip in last week's draw at Taunton

Rugby Union

Wales leave Quinnell on back-burner

David Plummer

WALES have wasted no time in recalling four of their former internationals who return after a summer of rugby league.

The Wales coach Kevin Bowring wants them to pass on their working knowledge of professionalism. "It is early to bring them back in to the fold, but they have been professional players for a long time and know exactly what that involves," said Bowring.

Three uncapped players are called in: the Pontypridd centre Jason Lewis, the Neath hooker Barry Williams and the Neath flanker Ian Bowyer. Bowring plans to use the matches against France and Italy to look at new combinations before the December Tests against Australia and South Africa.

The early games give us the opportunity to try something different," he said. "We have been looking for clubs to embrace the new style of rugby based on pace and continuity which we believe is necessary if Wales is to become a force again."

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Anglo-Welsh Cup: Bath 87, Swansea 15

Bath's league recruits shine

Robert Armstrong

BATH, aided and abetted by their Wigan league recruits Henry Paul and Jason Robinson, inflicted a humiliating 13-try defeat on Swansea in their first meeting in the new Anglo-Welsh Cup at the Recreation Ground last night.

The try-hungry Paul wasted no time in paying off part of his £80,000 contract with two early touchdowns while Robinson, who scored twice near the end, created scoring chances for his union teammates with astute tactical running. Swansea, who looked reasonably strong on paper, were so out of their depth that at one stage they seemed in danger of conceding 100 points.

A smallish crowd saw Bath begin with a brilliant salvo of 17 points in the opening seven minutes. Adebayo, the powerful England A wing, punished the rather casual Swansea defence with two well-worked tries at the left flag within four minutes of the kick-off. The first followed a chip across the in-goal area by the fly-half Butland; the second an opportunistic effort.

Paul, who is thought to be earning £5,000 a game during his four-month sabbatical from Wigan, threw down the gauntlet two minutes later. He imperiously twisted away from a half-hearted Swansea tackle and hared down the left flank for a touchdown greeted with roars of acclamation. It was the league star's first points in first-class union.

After 15 minutes Paul proved it was no fluke when he took a short inside pass from the Bath skipper De Glanville and, with a 40-metre midfield break, crossed the try line near the posts. Callard's conversion established an unassailable 24-0 lead.

Bath relaxed sufficiently just before the half-hour to allow Swansea to plunder their first score via the left wing Simon Davies, who hacked on to complete a 40-metre touchline run with a splendid try.

Three minutes before the break Bath resumed normal service with a scorching diagonal run by Callard, who scored between the posts to leave himself a simple conversion.

On the stroke of half-time Weatherly, who had replaced the injured Williams, barged over for a try to the right of the posts that did something to raise Swansea's flagging morale as Bath led 31-10 at the break.

Swansea found Bath's non-stop movement no easier to contain in the second half as they conceded a storming try by the lock Haag and a marvellous solo effort by Webster, who left his wings kept the Swansea flag flying with a brilliant solo try in the right corner but a minute later the ebullient Webster skipped through to claim a second try.

Robinson then added two tries as Peters scored No. 13 just before the whistle.

SCORERS: Bath: Tries Adebayo (2), Paul (2), Callard, Haag, Webster (2), De Glanville, Butland, Robinson (2), Peters, Conversion: Callard (11). Swansea: Tries S Davies (2), Weatherly, Robinson, P De Glanville, H Paul, J Robinson, R Butland, C Harradine, M Davies, G Jones, S Thomas, R Williams. Conversion: S Davies (2), P De Glanville (1). Referee: A Clement. A Palfrey, M Taylor, S Giblin, S Davies, A Williams, R Jones, J Suckett, G Jenkins, G Evans, R Moriarty, S Moore, D Miles, C Clarke, R Apperly.

Badminton

Honeymoon is over for Goode

ANDY GOODE, Britain's Olympic manager, has returned from honeymoon and must now try to save his job, writes Richard Jago. Goode, now married to the England player Joanne Wright, faces a move to replace him with a four-man coaching committee formed from the home countries.

Quinnell because only one No. 8, Steve Williams, has been included. Webster, Evans, Young and Gibbs have been recalled even though they have played less than half a dozen union games between them this season.

The Wales coach Kevin Bowring wants them to pass on their working knowledge of professionalism. "It is early to bring them back in to the fold, but they have been professional players for a long time and know exactly what that involves," said Bowring.

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Whitaker gives Leicestershire the edge in title stakes

Paul Weaver

THE highly competitive though rather mediocre competition for the County Championship, which enters its penultimate round today, could yet be decided by a forgotten factor: captaincy.

In the absence of an outstanding team the race was always likely to be decided by a variety of extraneous issues: the weather, the pitches, England calls, injuries...

Leadership qualities have been largely forgotten, and that is hardly surprising. The outstanding captain is Mike Gatting, whose Middlesex side are out of the running in seventh place.

At Surrey Adam Hockley has been even more impressive than Alec Stewart when leading a gifted side; at Essex Paul Frichard has made the most of his thoughtful deputy Nasser Hussain; Steve Marsh has been one of four skipper at Kent; and at Yorkshire David Byas, though

an improvement on Martyn Moxon, has sometimes appeared tactically challenged, particularly during the loss at Sussex.

At Derbyshire Dean Jones, with his massive self belief, has been a huge success but his pace-attack has also left him looking as well-armed as one of those Mexican villains in a spaghetti western.

All of this leaves us with James Whitaker of Leicestershire, possibly the best captain among the leaders. Whitaker has always cov-

eted ambitions of becoming a captain and will be rewarded if in 10 days Leicestershire lift their second ever County Championship.

With a lead of a single point, they know this means a single battle but he was unworried. "I am playing well, I am confident and I have no reason not to be," he said.

Montgomery is, and has been for two or three years, the best player in the world not to have won a major championship. He is very conscious of that and knows he needs to find a way of playing in majors as he does in lesser events.

"Last week I had my wife and daughter Olivia with me and I felt very relaxed," he said, and it may also help him to know that the man he beat last week, Sam Torrancia, who was eight strokes ahead at halfway, recognises his fellow French junior title on his way to becoming world No. 1 at that level, is a player of whom more will be heard. He had lost his two previous matches against Mantilla but he clearly learned the relevant lessons. Yesterday he won 6-2, 2-6, 6-1, fighting back from 0-3 in the deciding set by giving Mantilla an object lesson in how to use and counter the drop shot.

Tall, angular, quick and strong, Zabaleta looks light years ahead of Britain's Martin Lee, one of his temporary successors as the game's top junior. To win as he did, after losing nine out of 10 games in one passage of play, spoke

Leicestershire's England left-arm seamer Alan Munnally, who yesterday signed a new three-year contract, returns to the side at Chester-le-Street. Their West Indian all-rounder Phil Simmons has also signed a new deal, for two years.

Jack Birkenshaw, their enthusiastic cricket manager, yesterday predicted "an historic fortnight. The target has to be to take maximum points".

Stuart Law, the 27-year-old Australian who has not played for Essex since the

NetWest Trophy semi-final win over Surrey, returns to Chelmsford from Sri Lanka to face a Sussex side who have lost their past four championship matches. But Essex could be without the seamer Nell Williams (high injury) for the run-in.

Kent's left-arm spinner Min Patel, left out of both England squads, could return against Hampshire in their final home match. Kent slipped to fifth after missing last week's round of matches.

Olympic Games

Redgrave on board for bid

John Duncan

STEVE REDGRAVE put his considerable muscle to a British Olympic bid yesterday, urging the country to get behind a campaign to bring the Games to Britain for the first time since 1948.

"The ordinary person in the street is desperate for us to be successful in sport," said Redgrave. "If we can set the ball rolling, we should be able to make a strong bid for the Games in 2008 or 2012. There is plenty of young talent around waiting to be developed. What an incentive they would have if the Games were in their own country."

The British Olympic Association wants a government-backed London bid for 2008 with a rebuilt national stadium as the centrepiece. "I would be very keen to get involved," said Redgrave, whose win in the coxless pairs with Matthew Pinsent was Britain's only gold medal of the Atlanta Games. "The Olympics have been my life since school. I would relish the chance to bring them here."

Redgrave was speaking as Barclaycard announced a \$6 million scheme to fund grassroots sport. The scheme includes a £10,000 monthly award for successful athletes as well as funding to help the mass of volunteers on whom British sport relies.

Golf

Faldo flies in to view video

David Davies at St Non in Bretonche

NICK FALDO, making one of his sporadic European raids, has found that nothing much has changed. The US Masters champion arrived in France on Tuesday to play in the Trophée Languine near Versailles just in time to walk into a special players' meeting.

"What I found out," he said yesterday, "was that all we have been complaining about for three years had come to a head at Collingtree and the British Masters there."

It was there, of course, on a course jointly owned by the European Tour itself and IMG, the tour's principal promoters, that the greens were the worst that many experienced players had ever attempted to play on.

Tennis

Zabaleta checks Mantilla's rise on wrong sort of clay

David Irvine at Bournemouth

SPANIARDS outnumber seven Americans among the top 65 players on the ATP's latest ranking list but, as Felix Mantilla found to his cost here yesterday, quantity offers no guarantee when establishing success.

On the relatively rare green clay at the Bournemouth International Mantilla was decidedly off-colour when his rise from 110th to 16th position, mainly on the back of 40 victories on the red variety, was halted by an 18-year-old Argentinian occupying a modest 125th place.

However, Mariano Zabaleta, who last year took the French junior title on his way to becoming world No. 1 at that level, is a player of whom more will be heard. He had lost his two previous matches against Mantilla but he clearly learned the relevant lessons. Yesterday he won 6-2, 2-6, 6-1, fighting back from 0-3 in the deciding set by giving Mantilla an object lesson in how to use and counter the drop shot.

Tall, angular, quick and strong, Zabaleta looks light years ahead of Britain's Martin Lee, one of his temporary successors as the game's top junior. To win as he did, after losing nine out of 10 games in one passage of play, spoke

US top five set for Match Play

Montgomery, the top two on the European Tour, will join Mark Brooks, Tom Lehman, Steve Jones, Phil Mickelson and Mark O'Meara, as will Steve Eldington, last year's runner-up.

Nick Faldo has a prior commitment in Japan.

Jan Woosnam and Colin

while the proceedings were held to be private, Faldo shed some light on it.

"A major priority," he said, "is, and always has been, to get courses in Europe conditioned properly." Britain's best-ever golfer left his home tour principally in search of better facilities in the United States, both for practice and for playing; that move was seen to pay off in April, after just over a year there, when he won his third Masters.

Cricket

News and Scores 0891 22 88 +

Table with 2 columns: County, Points. Lists counties and their points: Derbyshire 31, Middlesex 40, Durham 22, Northants 41, Essex 33, Nottingham 42, Glamorgan 34, Somerset 43, Gloucestershire 35, Surrey 44, Hampshire 36, Sussex 45, Kent 37, Warwickshire 46, Lancashire 38, Wiltshire 47, Leicestershire 39, Yorkshire 48.

Complete county scores 0891 22 88 30

SportsGuardian

HOLDERS JUVENTUS HAND OUT A LESSON TO ENGLAND'S FINEST

Champions' League: Group C
Juventus 1, Manchester United 0

Boksic leaves United groping

David Lacey in Turin

IN EUROPE, Manchester United clearly still have some way to go. Only wasteful finishing by Juventus preserved United's interest in their opening Champions League game in the Stadio delle Alpi here last night. Alen Boksic gave the European Cup holders the lead just past the half-hour, and by then Juventus had missed several chances.

In 1994 Arsenal held Torino to a grim goalless draw here in the Cup Winners' Cup and, dreary though that spectacle was, it offered some clues about the way United needed to approach last night's match. Under George Graham, Arsenal became adept at denying European sides space; United had to do something similar.

With the need for European nous paramount, Alex Ferguson decided to partner Pallister with Johnsen at centre-back. The front three were entirely foreign, with Poborsky and Cruyff flanking Cantona. The manager had started the day in English mode by reportedly signing Gary Neville, his brother Phil, David Beckham, Nicky Butt and Paul Scholes to new contracts that will keep the young ones at Old Trafford until 2001.

But last night, with Juventus content to play the patient and possessive European way, the football took a while to break out of its gentle ebb-and-flow, although the ease with which Boksic started to turn United's defence on the left was worrying for the English champions.

Just before the quarter-hour a raking pass from Deschamps, one of two Frenchmen in the Juventus side, sent Boksic clear and Conte seemed likely to score as he met the volley at the far post.

But he stabbed his shot into the ground and the ball flew over the crossbar.

United's attack was less in evidence. With Butt playing in Keane's anchor role and keeping a watchful eye on Zidane, while Beckham and Gigs were tucked in to the midfield, Poborsky and Cruyff tended to be isolated on the flanks. Up front Cantona often had only Montero for company.

While it did not make for a riveting spectacle, United's pattern was clearly designed to subdue the tempo of the game, as in the FA Cup final which set out to stifle Liverpool's passing rhythms.

Boksic, however, continued to make his own space despite United's tactics. Midway through the first half he popped up on the right wing, this time to produce a cross which might have set up Viano for a goal had the ball not bounced awkwardly as he met it. Four minutes later he squandered a much better chance as United began to ride their luck a little.

This time Del Piero supplied a cross from the left which found Viero rising between the centre-backs for what amounted to a free header. Free or not, he still managed to nod the ball over.

On the half-hour Schmeichel could only parry a 25-yard shot from Pessotto and Conte pounced on the rebound to find the net, only to find a flag already up. United's relief, however, was short-lived.

Three minutes later they forced their first corner, a big mistake. From it Juventus swept away on the counter-attack. Zidane's through-pass caught United with thin cover at the back and the rest was down to Boksic. After evading Butt, the Croatian calmly chipped the ball past the advancing Schmeichel.

Boksic ended the first half



Push off... United's attacking Czech Poborsky pulls away from Pessotto and the upright Boksic

ROSS KINNARD

with a yellow card for fouling Gigs, who gave way to McClair in the second. The change made little difference to the overall trend which continued to find Juventus piercing United's cover with ominous ease.

By now Deschamps and Zidane were doing much as they liked in midfield while the overlapping runs of Pessotto on the left became more and more ambitious. Soon after half-time Cantona managed to set up a promising movement around the Juventus penalty area but Poborsky

wasted it with a wild centre.

Soon after this the Czech gave the ball away to Del Piero in his own penalty area and only Johnsen's interception saved the situation for United after the Italian had crossed from the byline. Then Gary Neville nearly let in

Montero, coming through strongly from the back.

Still, United were only a goal behind and the scores might have been level after an hour had Poborsky made better contact as he made a late run to the far post to meet Neville's deep centre.

Manchester United: Schmeichel, G. Neville, Johnsen, Pallister, Irwin, Beckham, Butt, Gigs (McClair, h-t), Poborsky (Cole, 77), Cantona, Cruyff (Scholes, 77).

Referee: M. Merk (Germany).

Raise one last glass to Sam and Clem



Frank Keating

SAM COOK was buried at St Mary's in Tebury on Tuesday. Clem Thomas's funeral takes place at St Paul's in Swansea's Sketty this very mid-morning. Two grand men suddenly no more.

Sam nearly took more wickets (1,783) than he scored runs (1,865) for Gloucestershire in his 15-year career as a meticulous left-arm spinner. He played one solitary Test for England before becoming a much-loved fixture on the first-class umpires' panel, and when not adjudicating on England's green fields of summer, he would winter content as Tebury's favourite plumber.

Clem was an ex-strong back-row forward, a British Lion who played 26 times for Wales, often as captain, before becoming a trenchant sportswriter.

A farmer's son, Clem ran the family's secondary business for a time. "I was the only player I know who took his profession on to the field," he would chuckle. "I was a wholesale butcher."

Reverie-reflective Sam and ever-zealous Clem were totally different back-page heroes, though similarly appealing smiles would cease their hale and nutbrown faces. Sam's tan reflected his 40 summers as a craft-versed long-day toiler. Clem's ruddy complexion was testament to his beguiling summers in France, sampling his beloved Bordeaux and Burgundies.

Clem was a man of gusto, as much in his writing as in his tackling during his playing days. When his friend John Arlott, like Clem a sometime radical Liberal candidate, wrote his poem about Clem's beloved home paddock, St Helen's, he might have had Clem in his mind's eye and his "high-tramping scrum-maging game."

*Intense as an Eisteddfod anthem
It burns down the day like a flame.*

Clem had bottle all right. Soon after an appendicectomy operation, he defied the doctors and helped the Lions beat the dreaded Springboks in the third Test of 1955. A year earlier his daring cross-kick of nervesless grandeur brought Wales a last-gasp victory against the All Blacks.

Probably the only insecurity of Clem's vibrant life was his need to carry a copy of Roger's Thesaurus around the press boxes of the world. He never had to use it, of course, and when you chided him for it he'd just chuckle "Bigger off!"

At 18, still callow at Cambridge, his first vac-match back home was for Neath. It was against Penarth on an all-round filthy night, and his opposite number clogged him viciously. The Neath pack immediately noted vengeance, kicking the culprit all over the Groll.

"Till the day I die," Clem would recall, "I'll remember him looking up at them and pleading 'Ave an' ear, boys, 'ave an' ear.'"

Uncompromising as he was, Clem abhorred snidely dirty players and the presiding mandarins of rugby's Unions. The last thing I can find that he wrote included the line: "Because of his physical nature, rugby needs, above all, to be based on fun, fellowship, and trust."

CLEM would have been 68 this winter. Sam Cook was 76 last month. In the pastoral perfection of a boyhood in "Glorse", one loved Sam from the first for his own obvious fellowship and trust as he'd faithfully stopper-up one end to allow the fluting finger-pan of Goddard and Wells, Allen and Mortimore to bite the haters' balls off at the other.

In the gully once, a ball cut his cheek. "Don't worry, Sam," said his best pal George Lambert at slip. "It's not blood, it's Worthington K. Sam, who averaged less than five with the bat, was noted for a chop the players called "the kill-the-rat drive".

Yet as a cricket reporter in the 70s and 80s one knew that county match scorecard that read "Umpires: 80-AND-80 AND S COOK" meant a rewarding evening that would invariably begin and end with Sam saying, "What are you having, then?"

He was picked for England in 1947 after just a season with the county, against South Africa on a bed-of-marble pitch at Trent Bridge. "Tell 'em you've got 'em, Sam," urged his wise old mentor Tom Goddard. England 12th man Doug Wright felt the same. "I'm so sorry, young Sam," he told Cook. "Rather you than me."

Sam bowled nine overs in each innings, suffered figures of 0-127 and was never considered again. But he wore his England blazer to the very end, doing his veg allotment in it sometimes, or his plumbing jobs round Tebury. Quite right too.

Soccer chiefs blamed for new stadium delay

John Duncan on the growing danger of national arena plans collapsing

THE NEW £180 million national stadium may never be built because of foot-dragging by England's football authorities according to sources close to the Lottery Sports Fund, which will provide the cash.

The Sports Council, responsible for co-ordinating the choice of a site for the stadium, has set a November 8 deadline for full bids to be submitted by Manchester and Wembley, both shortlisted in October 1995.

No more delays will be allowed and, if the November deadline is missed, both bids will fall. However, Manchester has already threatened the Sports Council with a judicial review, plunging the entire process into more chaos and delays.

There are strong indications that neither bidder will be able to meet the deadline because the football authorities, primarily the Football Association, which will bring England matches and the FA Cup final to the stadium, and

the Premier League, which who will invest cash, have not yet reached a satisfactory agreement with either of the potential bidders despite almost 12 months of negotiating.

The Sports Council is said to be increasingly frustrated at the slow pace of the football authorities' negotiations, having granted two extensions of the deadline already.

The football authorities are currently refusing to agree to commit to any new stadium for the next 20 years, something the stadium needs to be commercially viable. They want a five-year deal instead, which breaches one of the key elements of the Sports Council's requirements — a long-term commitment by event-holders.

The FA admits that negotiations with the stadium bidders are not complete but deny any foot-dragging. "We are fully aware of the deadline," said an FA spokesman yesterday, "and we are more

than confident that it will be met."

If no new stadium is built, Britain has no chance of hosting a major athletics championship or the 2008 Olympics.

Other problems remain unresolved. Wembley, the overwhelming favourite to get the money, has still not solved the Sports Council's main fear over their bid — the financial relationship between debt-laden Wembley Stadium Limited and the new stadium.

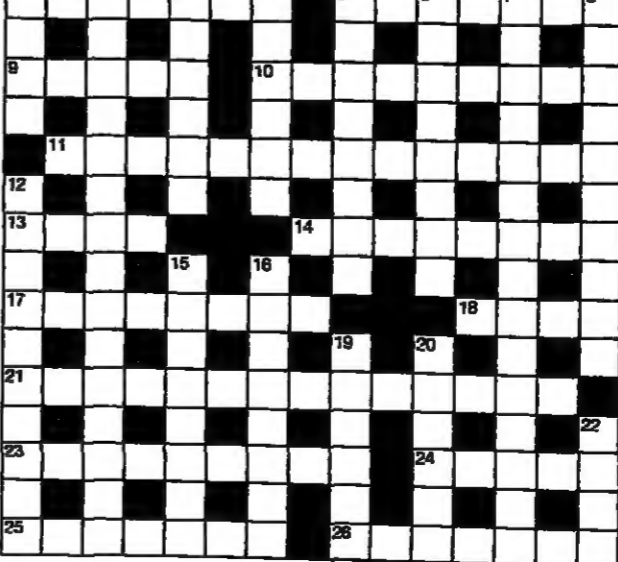
The Sports Council does not want the award of a new stadium effectively to bail Wembley plc out of a difficult financial position.

If neither bidder is chosen, the Lottery Sports Fund is almost certain to face legal action by Wembley and Manchester, who claim that the Sports Council has complicated the final bidding process by including new requirements.

The Sports Council chief executive Derek Casey has written to at least one party involved in the deal, which includes the governing bodies of football, rugby league and athletics, asking it to set out in detail any grounds for legal objection it is harbouring.

Guardian Crossword No 20,756

Set by Mercury



- Across**
- 1 Decoration in a cleaner's room (7)
 - 5 A duck in a box should make you laugh! (7)
 - 9 One has to be one (5)
 - 10 Strong tea stirred with a ruler (9)
 - 11 Driving around he'd be with Henkle (6,3,5)
 - 13 Declares thoroughfare will meet with resistance (4)
 - 14 Top people on these may be nothing standing here (5)
 - 17 Mother always takes Doctor East into castles in Spain (8)
 - 18 Cash drawer having illuminated back on one side (4)
 - 21 Waiter had skung out some of my relatives (9-2-3)
 - 23 Label ballad about Capone as follows (4,5)
- Down**
- 24 Gaelic hair is having some (5)
 - 25 In use on board air passages (7)
 - 26 Person proposed by Noel left without going round colliery (7)
 - 1 Bird caught on a string (4)
 - 2 Betty Hutton film tune angering you when broadcast (5,3,4,3)
 - 3 Black Queen will take nothing standing here (5)
 - 4 Knocks swimmer into dangerous part of river (5)
 - 5 Infectious musical composition in G (8)
 - 6 Famous version of 9 across with a different end (8)
 - 7 Suitable test for those wishing to become dentists? (4,1,1)

CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS

5 Lend's eyes swivel unnecessarily! (10)
12 Frank has a set brought up for the examinee (10)
15 Curved structures built by cunning methods (9)
16 Voracious painter of vases (8)
19 Figure one will have £1,000 in shortly (6)
20 Burning stable that's decrepit (6)
22 Second person referring to God (4)

Solutions tomorrow

23 Stuck? Then call our solutions line on 0800 338 238. Calls cost 50p per min, cheap rates, 40p per min at other times. Service supplied by ADS.

Maths.

Schmaths.

Bass BEST SELLING PREMIUM CASK ALE SINCE 1777

It is September 12, 2001. The sky is a menacing iron grey. Snow lies two feet deep in Oxford Street, and on the frozen Thames crowds jostle to barter for unidentifiable meat morsels to supplement their government rations.

Online, page 10

مكازم الأصيل

Friday Sept...
Friday

maybe over for

Inside